RIGHT ON, WITH THE *CYCLING SUPERHERO!*

HELL-RIDER™

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A SKYWALD PUBLICATION

NIGHT
OF THE
RIPPER!

BLOOD FOR THE
WILD BUNCH!

SHE STINGS
LIKE A BEE,
FLOATS LIKE
THE BUTTERFLY!

HELL-RIDER

VOL. 1 NO 2 OCT. 1971

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THE WILD BUNCH

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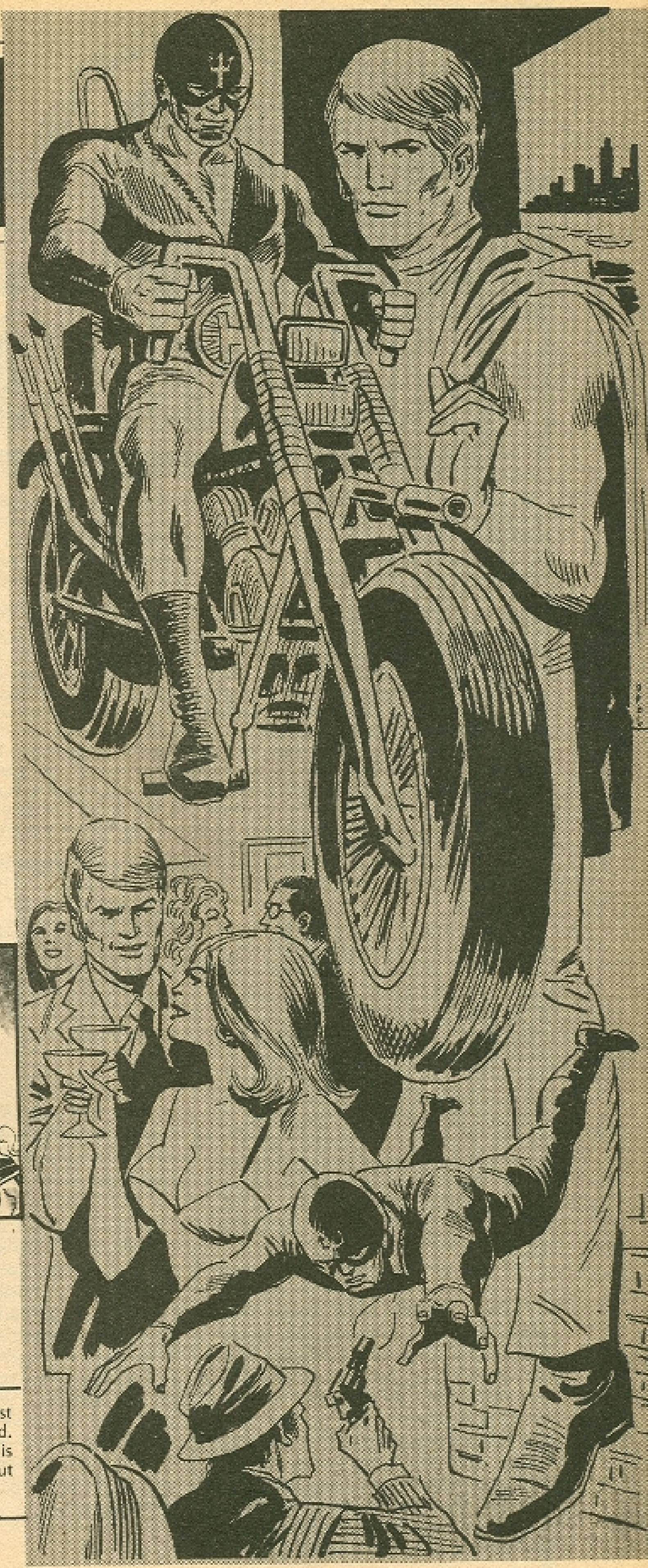
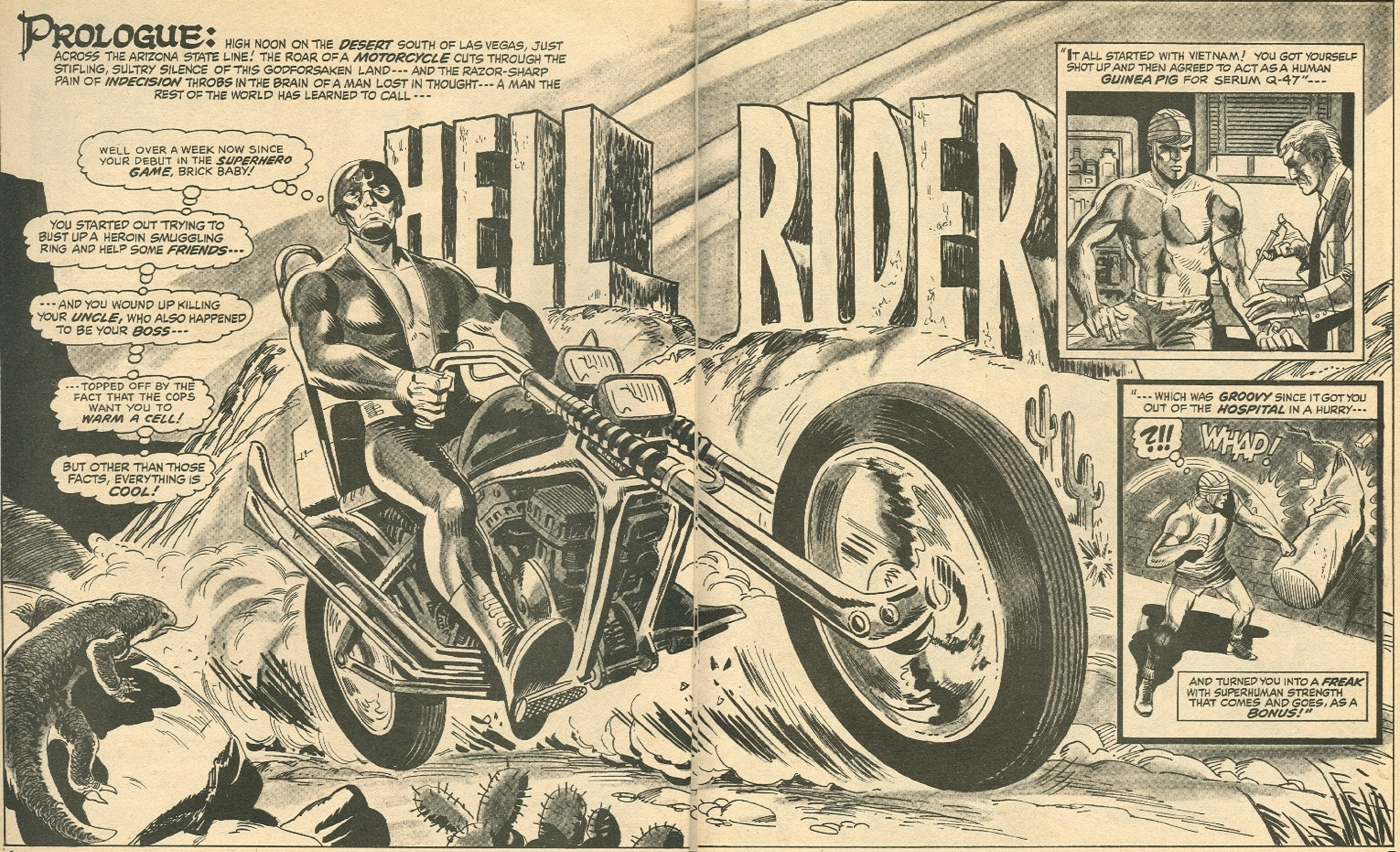
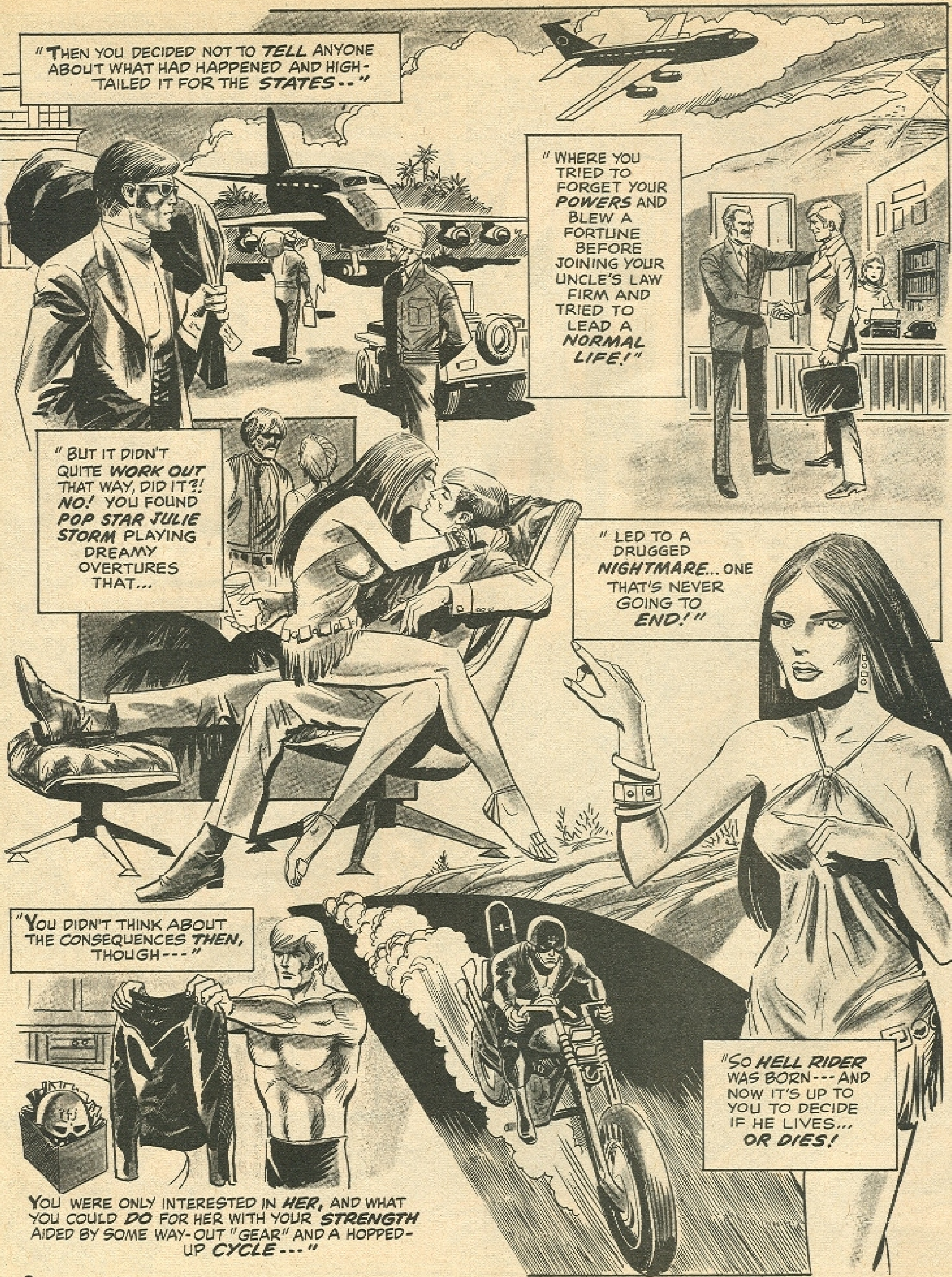
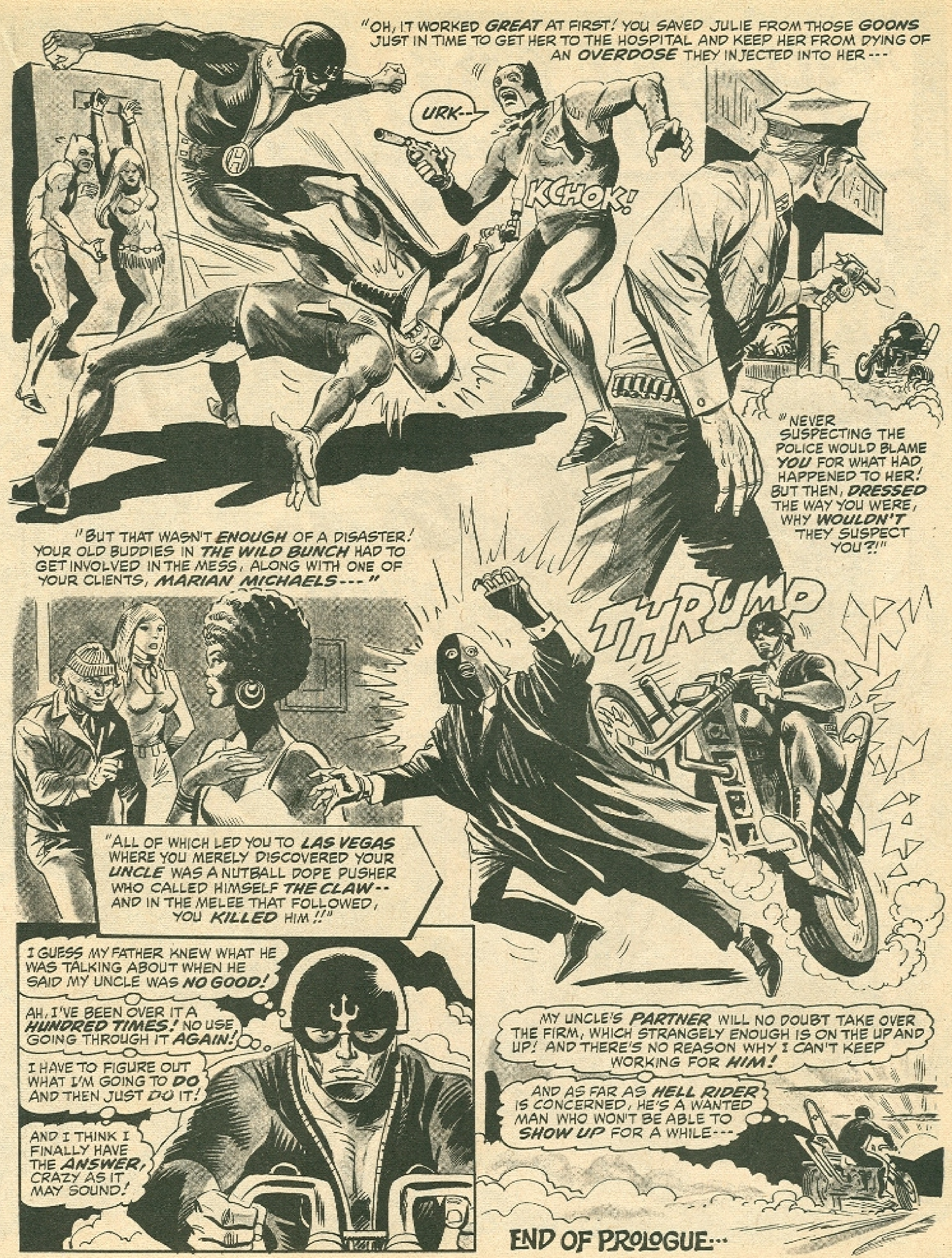



PROLOGUE: HIGH NOON ON THE DESERT SOUTH OF LAS VEGAS, JUST ACROSS THE ARIZONA STATE LINE! THE ROAR OF A MOTORCYCLE CUTS THROUGH THE STIFLING, SULTRY SILENCE OF THIS GODFORSAKEN LAND--- AND THE RAZOR-SHARP PAIN OF INDECISION THROBS IN THE BRAIN OF A MAN LOST IN THOUGHT--- A MAN THE REST OF THE WORLD HAS LEARNED TO CALL---
HELL RIDER
WELL OVER A WEEK NOW SINCE YOUR DEBUT IN THE SUPERHERO GAME, BRICK BABY!
YOU STARTED OUT TRYING TO BUST UP A HEROIN SMUGGLING RING AND HELP SOME FRIENDS---
---AND YOU WOUND UP KILLING YOUR UNCLE, WHO ALSO HAPPENED TO BE YOUR BOSS---
---TOPPED OFF BY THE FACT THAT THE COPS WANT YOU TO WARM A CELL!
BUT OTHER THAN THOSE FACTS, EVERYTHING IS COOL!
"IT ALL STARTED WITH VIETNAM! YOU GOT YOURSELF SHOT UP AND THEN AGREED TO ACT AS A HUMAN GUINEA PIG FOR SERUM Q-47"---
"---WHICH WAS GROOVY SINCE IT GOT YOU OUT OF THE HOSPITAL IN A HURRY---
?!!
WHAP!
AND TURNED YOU INTO A FREAK WITH SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH THAT COMES AND GOES, AS A BONUS!"

Script By: GARY FRIEDRICH • Art By: ROSS ANDRU and MIKE ESPOSITO

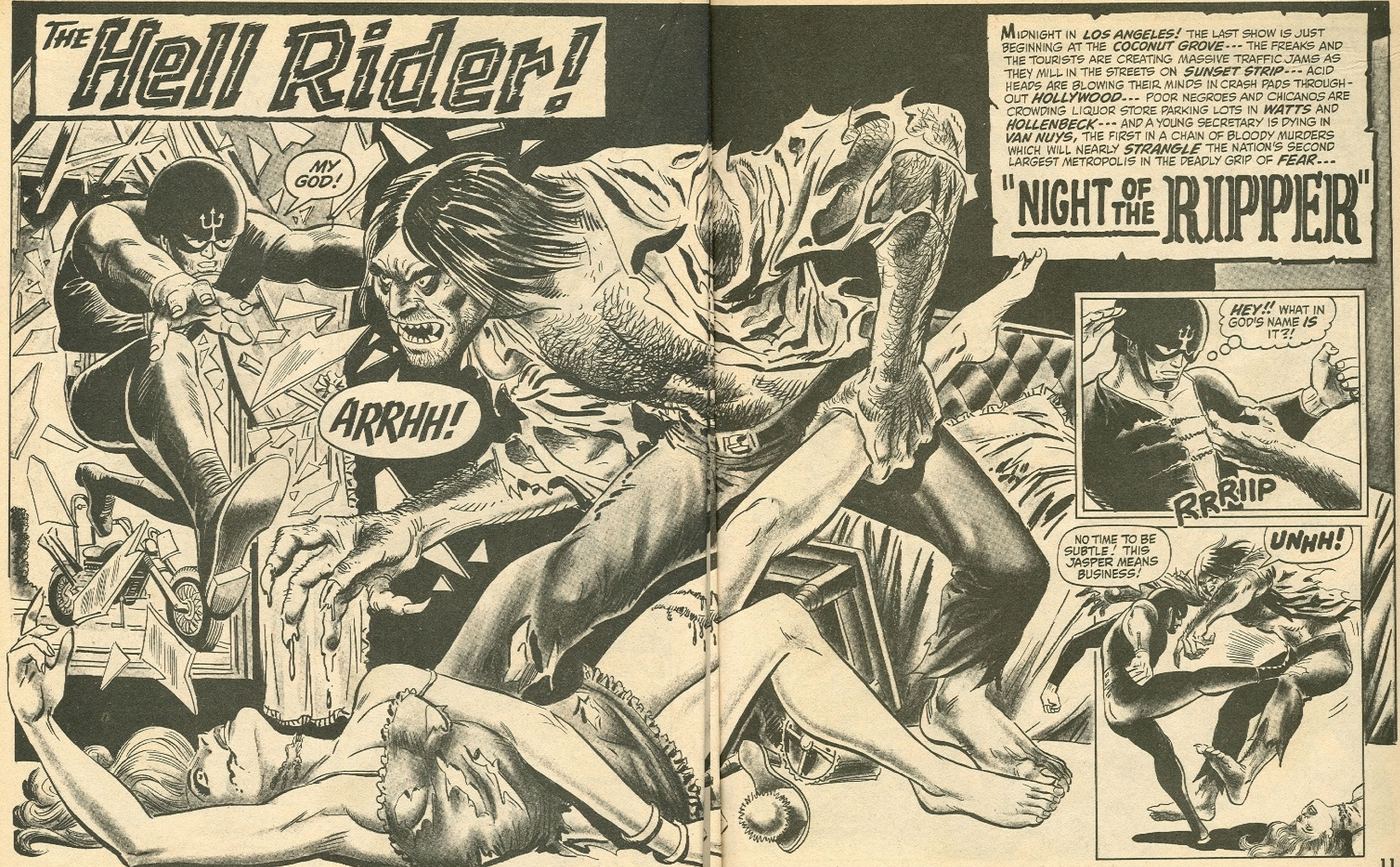

"THEN YOU DECIDED NOT TO *TELL* ANYONE ABOUT WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND HIGH-TAILED IT FOR THE *STATES--*"
"WHERE YOU TRIED TO FORGET YOUR *POWERS* AND BLEW A FORTUNE BEFORE JOINING YOUR UNCLE'S LAW FIRM AND TRIED TO LEAD A *NORMAL LIFE!*"
"BUT IT DIDN'T QUITE *WORK OUT* THAT WAY, DID IT?! *NO!* YOU FOUND *POP STAR JULIE STORM* PLAYING DREAMY OVERTURES THAT...
"LED TO A DRUGGED *NIGHTMARE*... ONE THAT'S NEVER GOING TO *END!*"
"YOU DIDN'T THINK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES *THEN,* THOUGH---"
YOU WERE ONLY INTERESTED IN *HER,* AND WHAT YOU COULD *DO* FOR HER WITH YOUR *STRENGTH* AIDED BY SOME WAY-OUT "GEAR" AND A HOPPED-UP *CYCLE---*"
"SO *HELL RIDER* WAS BORN---AND NOW IT'S UP TO YOU TO DECIDE IF HE LIVES... *OR DIES!*

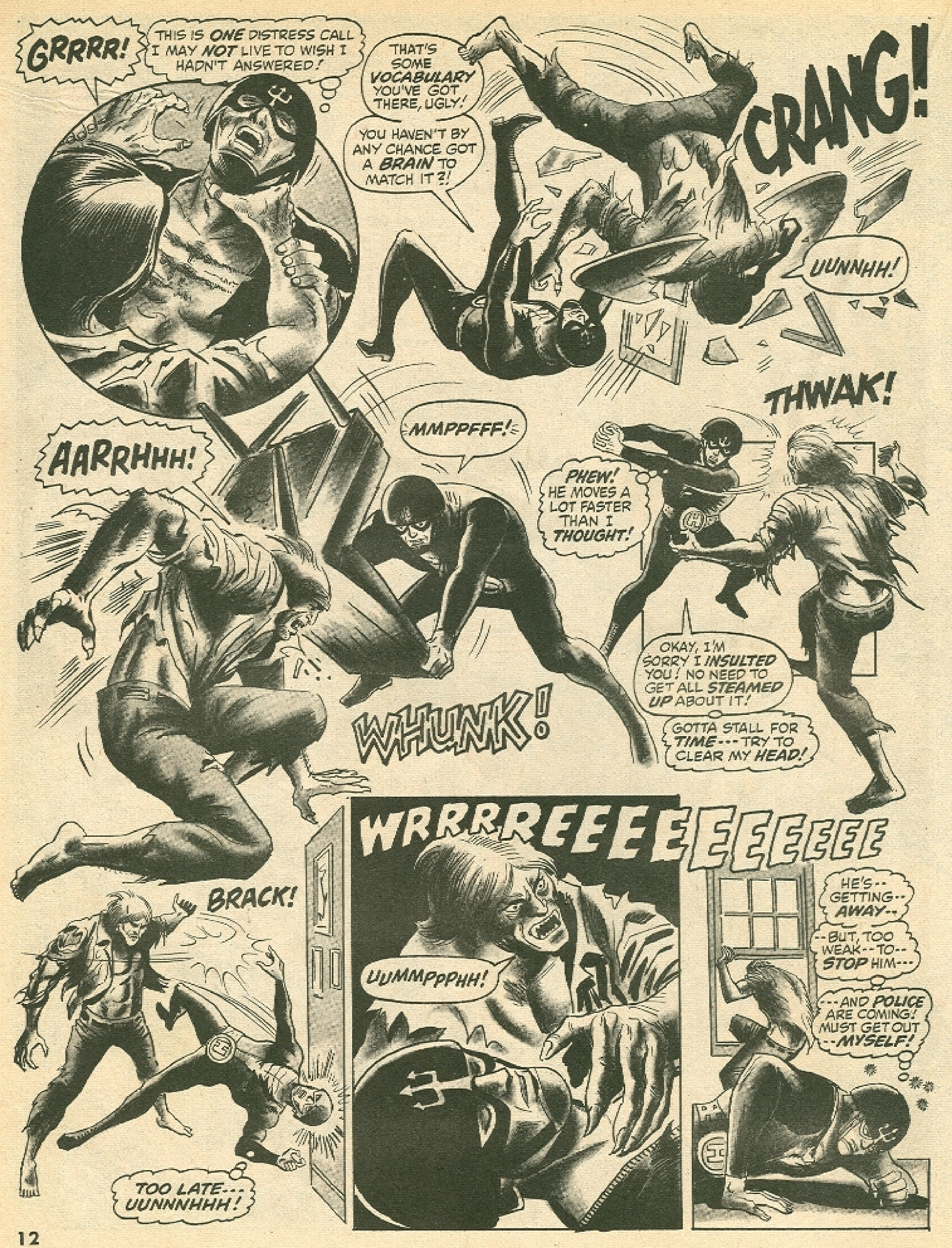

"OH, IT WORKED GREAT AT FIRST! YOU SAVED JULIE FROM THOSE GOONS JUST IN TIME TO GET HER TO THE HOSPITAL AND KEEP HER FROM DYING OF AN OVERDOSE THEY INJECTED INTO HER---
URK--
KCHOK!
"NEVER SUSPECTING THE POLICE WOULD BLAME YOU FOR WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO HER! BUT THEN, DRESSED THE WAY YOU WERE, WHY WOULDN'T THEY SUSPECT YOU?!"
"BUT THAT WASN'T ENOUGH OF A DISASTER! YOUR OLD BUDDIES IN THE WILD BUNCH HAD TO GET INVOLVED IN THE MESS, ALONG WITH ONE OF YOUR CLIENTS, MARIAN MICHAELS---"
THRUMP
"ALL OF WHICH LED YOU TO LAS VEGAS WHERE YOU MERELY DISCOVERED YOUR UNCLE WAS A NUTBALL DOPE PUSHER WHO CALLED HIMSELF THE CLAW-- AND IN THE MELEE THAT FOLLOWED, YOU KILLED HIM!!"
I GUESS MY FATHER KNEW WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT WHEN HE SAID MY UNCLE WAS NO GOOD!
AH, I'VE BEEN OVER IT A HUNDRED TIMES! NO USE GOING THROUGH IT AGAIN!
I HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT I'M GOING TO DO AND THEN JUST DO IT!
AND I THINK I FINALLY HAVE THE ANSWER, CRAZY AS IT MAY SOUND!
MY UNCLE'S PARTNER WILL NO DOUBT TAKE OVER THE FIRM, WHICH STRANGELY ENOUGH IS ON THE UP AND UP! AND THERE'S NO REASON WHY I CAN'T KEEP WORKING FOR HIM!
AND AS FAR AS HELL RIDER IS CONCERNED, HE'S A WANTED MAN WHO WON'T BE ABLE TO SHOW UP FOR A WHILE---
END OF PROLOGUE...

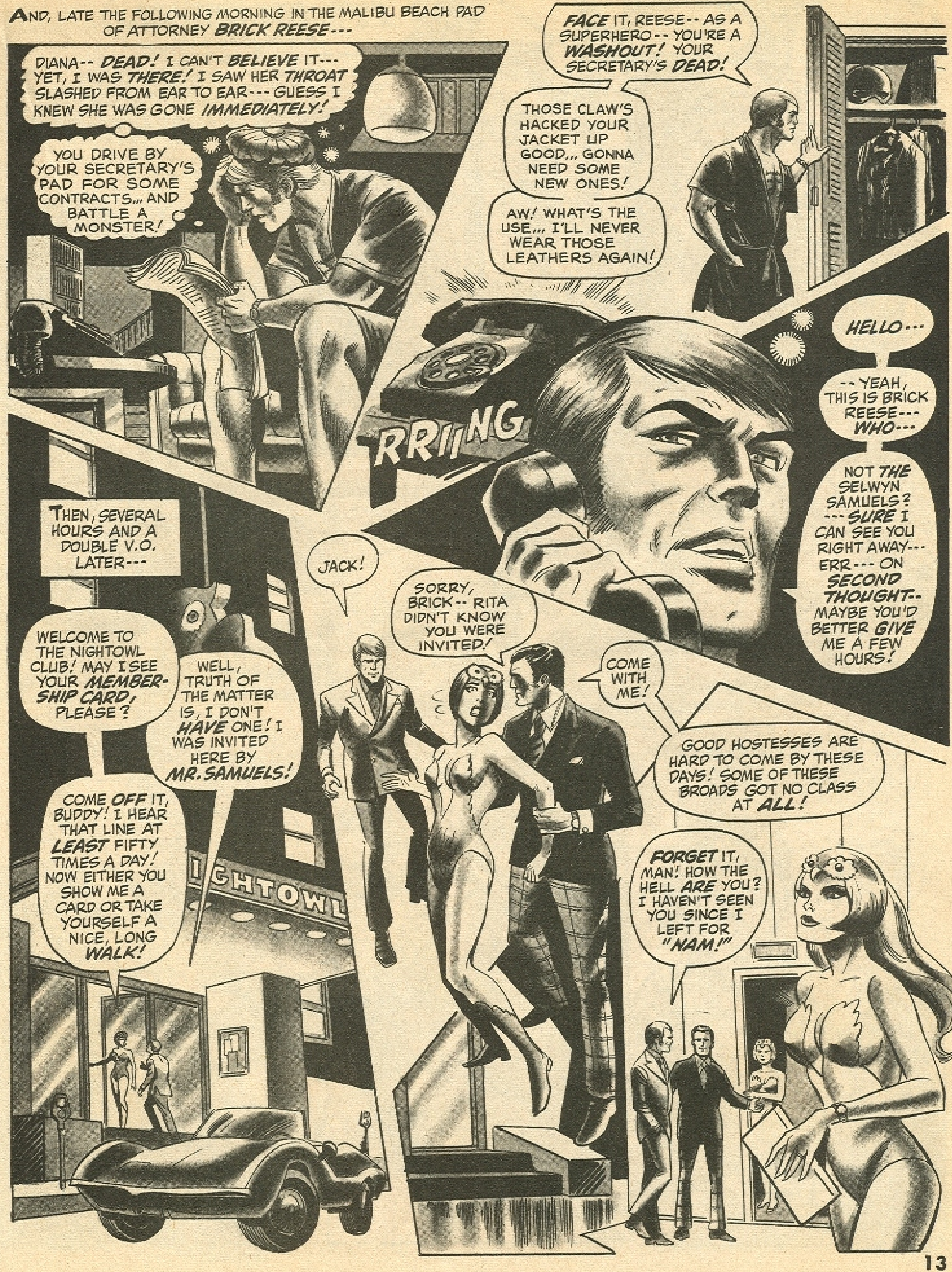
THE Hell Rider!

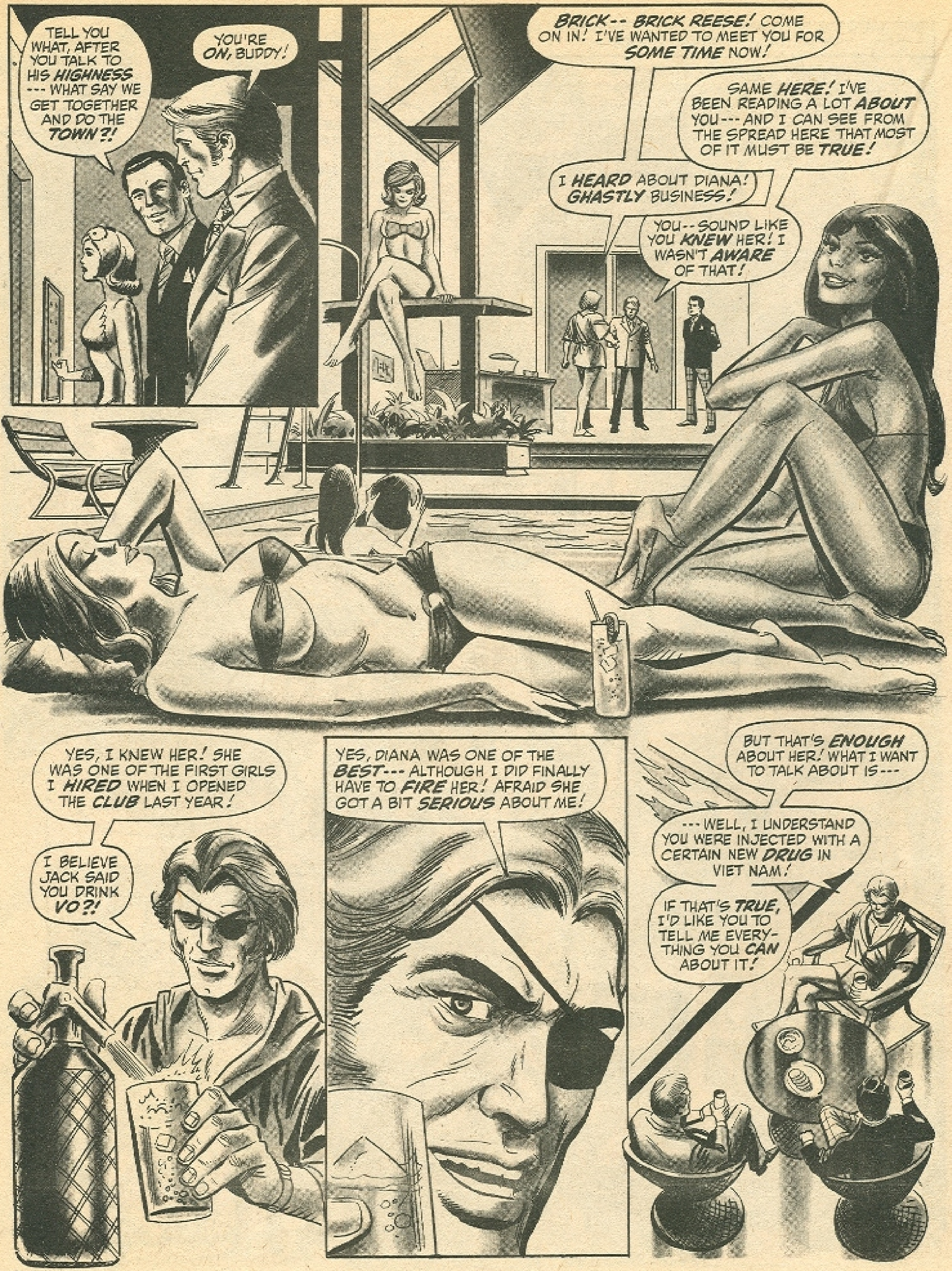
MIDNIGHT IN ***LOS ANGELES!*** THE LAST SHOW IS JUST BEGINNING AT THE ***COCONUT GROVE***--- THE FREAKS AND THE TOURISTS ARE CREATING MASSIVE TRAFFIC JAMS AS THEY MILL IN THE STREETS ON ***SUNSET STRIP***--- ACID HEADS ARE BLOWING THEIR MINDS IN CRASH PADS THROUGHOUT ***HOLLYWOOD***--- POOR NEGROES AND CHICANOS ARE CROWDING LIQUOR STORE PARKING LOTS IN ***WATTS*** AND ***HOLLENBECK***--- AND A YOUNG SECRETARY IS DYING IN ***VAN NUYS,*** THE FIRST IN A CHAIN OF BLOODY MURDERS WHICH WILL NEARLY ***STRANGLE*** THE NATION'S SECOND LARGEST METROPOLIS IN THE DEADLY GRIP OF ***FEAR***---

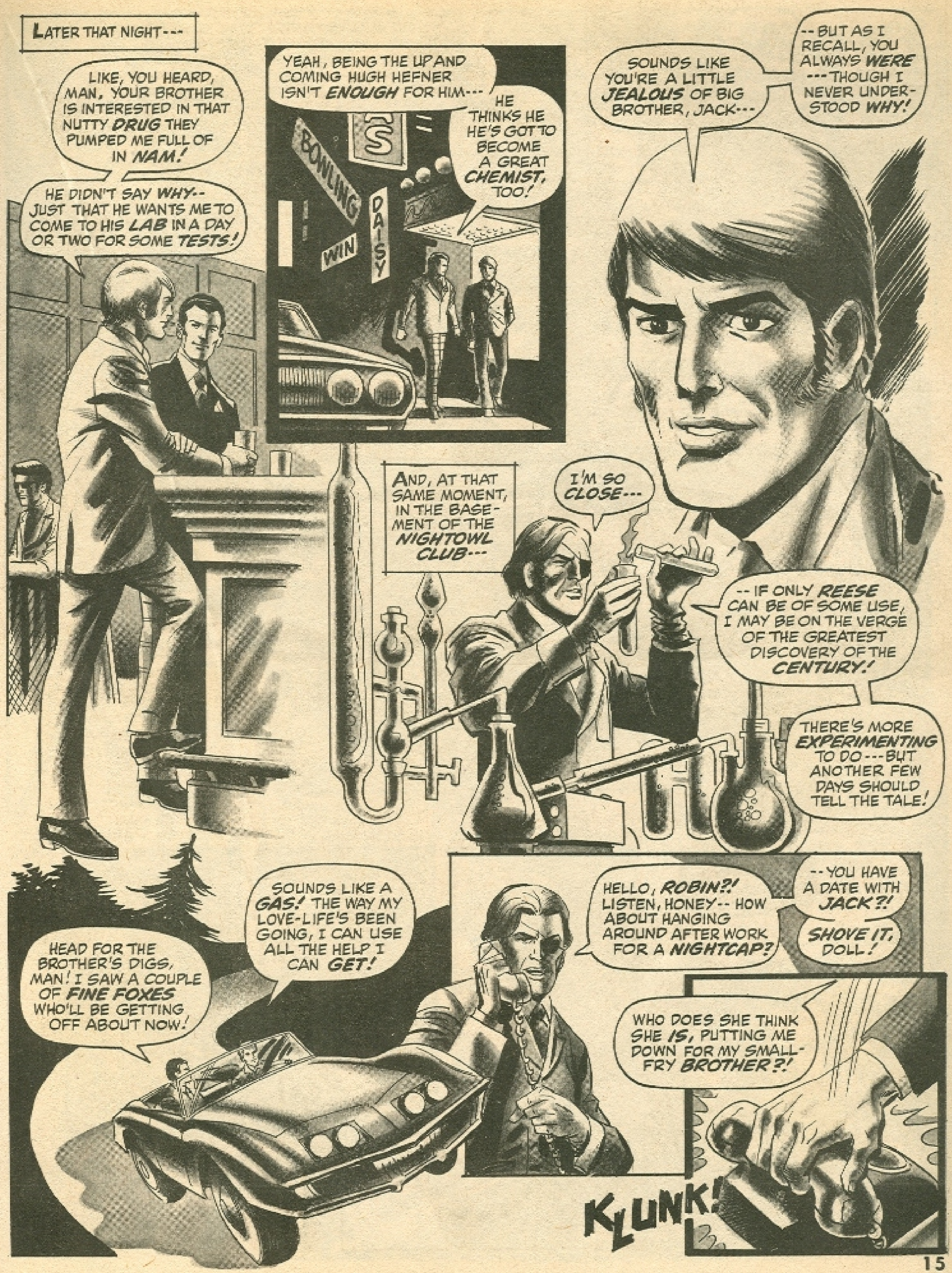
"NIGHT OF THE RIPPER"

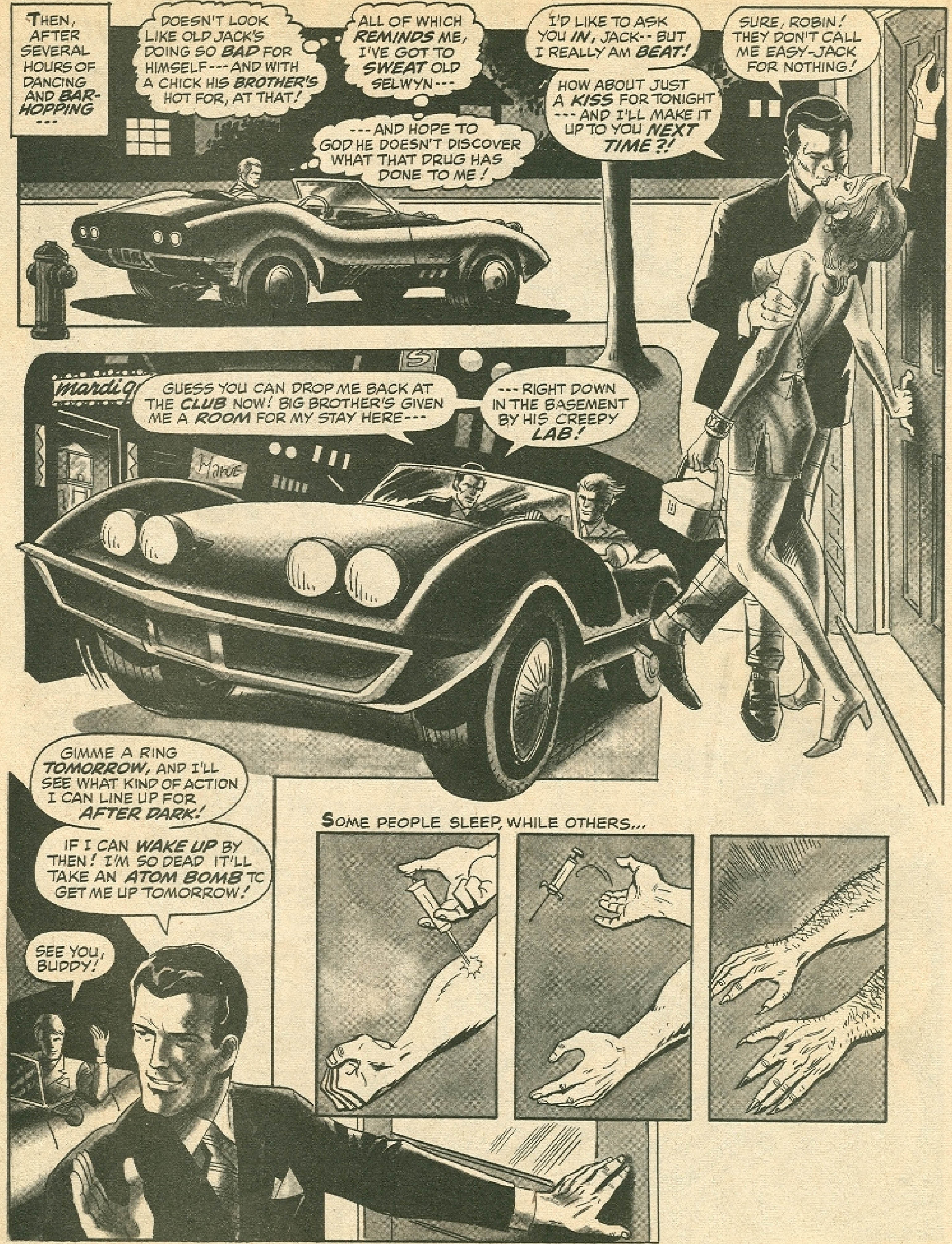

MY GOD!
ARRHH!
HEY!! WHAT IN GOD'S NAME IS IT?!
RRRIIP
NO TIME TO BE SUBTLE! THIS JASPER MEANS BUSINESS!
UNHH!

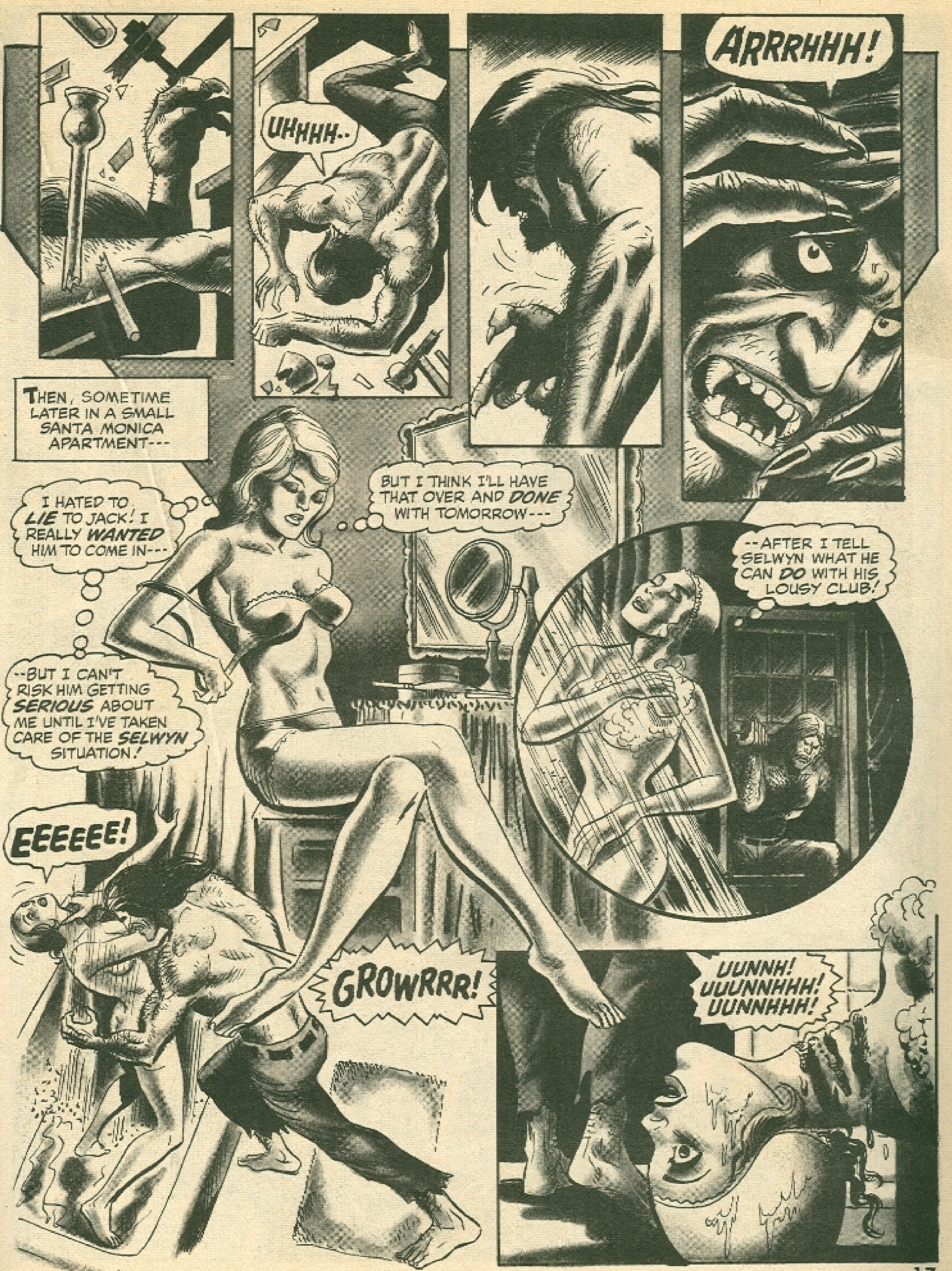

GRRRR!
THIS IS ONE DISTRESS CALL I MAY NOT LIVE TO WISH I HADN'T ANSWERED!
THAT'S SOME VOCABULARY YOU'VE GOT THERE, UGLY!
YOU HAVEN'T BY ANY CHANCE GOT A BRAIN TO MATCH IT?!
CRANG!
UUNNHH!
THWAK!
AARRHHH!
MMPPFFF!
PHEW! HE MOVES A LOT FASTER THAN I THOUGHT!
OKAY, I'M SORRY I INSULTED YOU! NO NEED TO GET ALL STEAMED UP ABOUT IT!
GOTTA STALL FOR TIME--- TRY TO CLEAR MY HEAD!
WHUNK!
BRACK!
TOO LATE--- UUNNHHH!
WRRRREEEEEEEEEE
UUMMPPPHH!
HE'S-- GETTING-- AWAY--
--BUT, TOO WEAK--TO-- STOP HIM---
---AND POLICE ARE COMING! MUST GET OUT --MYSELF!

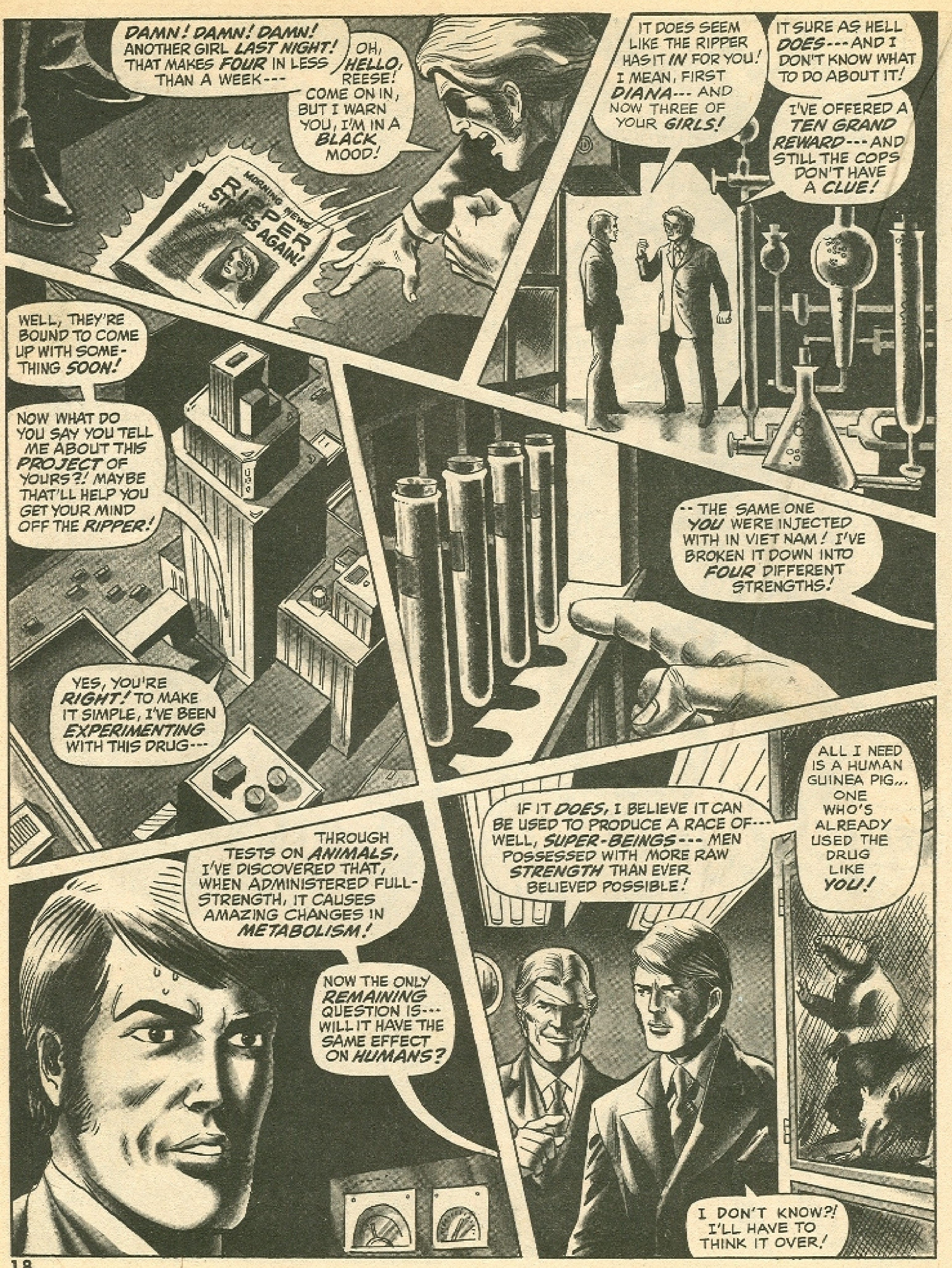

AND, LATE THE FOLLOWING MORNING IN THE MALIBU BEACH PAD OF ATTORNEY BRICK REESE---
DIANA-- DEAD! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT--- YET, I WAS THERE! I SAW HER THROAT SLASHED FROM EAR TO EAR--- GUESS I KNEW SHE WAS GONE IMMEDIATELY!
YOU DRIVE BY YOUR SECRETARY'S PAD FOR SOME CONTRACTS... AND BATTLE A MONSTER!
FACE IT, REESE-- AS A SUPERHERO-- YOU'RE A WASHOUT! YOUR SECRETARY'S DEAD!
THOSE CLAW'S HACKED YOUR JACKET UP GOOD... GONNA NEED SOME NEW ONES!
AW! WHAT'S THE USE... I'LL NEVER WEAR THOSE LEATHERS AGAIN!
RRIING
HELLO...
--YEAH, THIS IS BRICK REESE--- WHO---
NOT THE SELWYN SAMUELS? ---SURE I CAN SEE YOU RIGHT AWAY--- ERR--- ON SECOND THOUGHT-- MAYBE YOU'D BETTER GIVE ME A FEW HOURS!
THEN, SEVERAL HOURS AND A DOUBLE V.O. LATER---
WELCOME TO THE NIGHTOWL CLUB! MAY I SEE YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD, PLEASE?
WELL, TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS, I DON'T HAVE ONE! I WAS INVITED HERE BY MR. SAMUELS!
COME OFF IT, BUDDY! I HEAR THAT LINE AT LEAST FIFTY TIMES A DAY! NOW EITHER YOU SHOW ME A CARD OR TAKE YOURSELF A NICE, LONG WALK!
NIGHTOWL
JACK!
SORRY, BRICK-- RITA DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE INVITED!
COME WITH ME!
GOOD HOSTESSES ARE HARD TO COME BY THESE DAYS! SOME OF THESE BROADS GOT NO CLASS AT ALL!
FORGET IT, MAN! HOW THE HELL ARE YOU? I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE I LEFT FOR "NAM!"

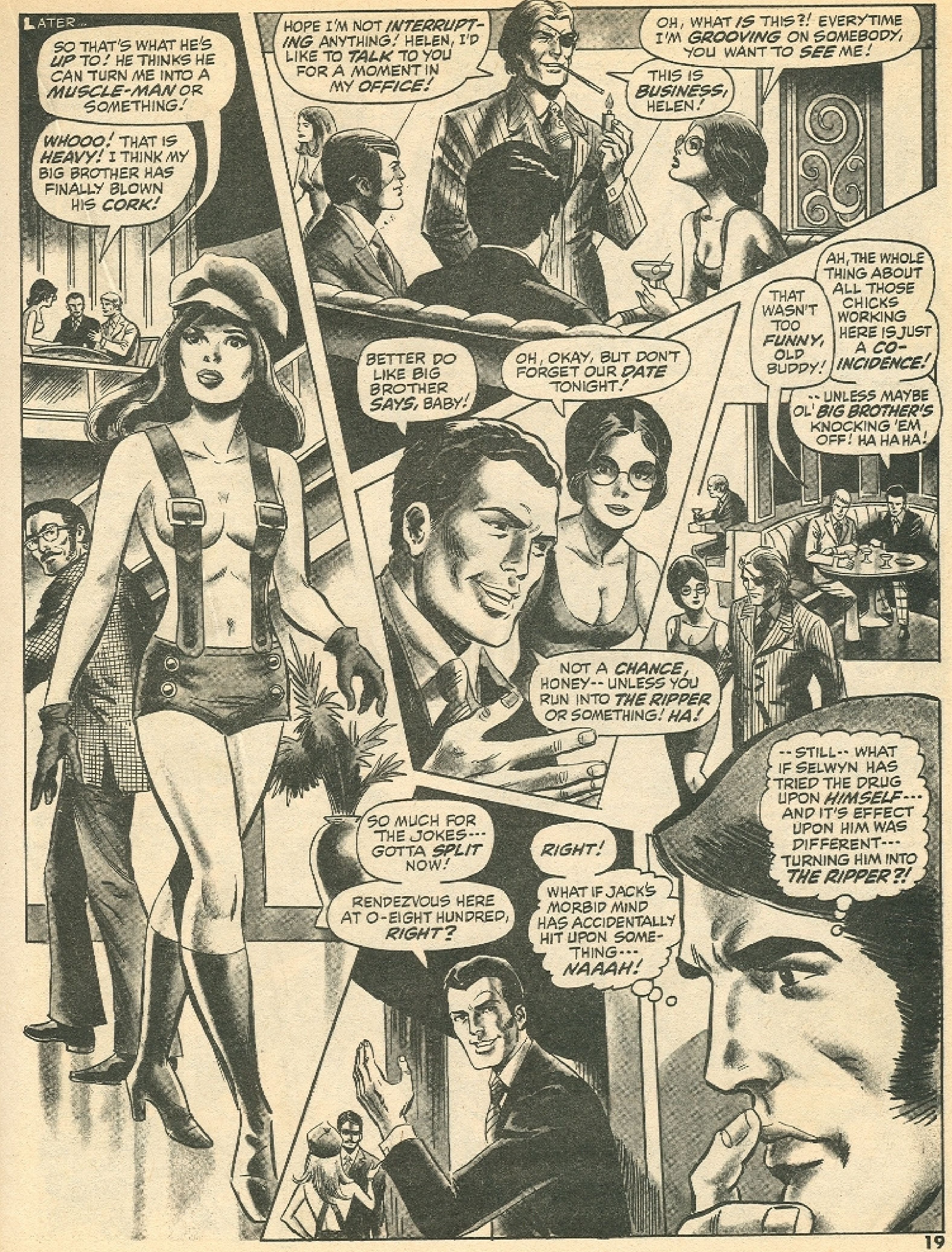

TELL YOU WHAT, AFTER YOU TALK TO HIS *HIGHNESS* --- WHAT SAY WE GET TOGETHER AND DO THE *TOWN?!*
YOU'RE *ON*, BUDDY!
BRICK-- BRICK REESE! COME ON IN! I'VE WANTED TO MEET YOU FOR *SOME TIME* NOW!
SAME *HERE!* I'VE BEEN READING A LOT *ABOUT* YOU--- AND I CAN SEE FROM THE SPREAD HERE THAT MOST OF IT MUST BE *TRUE!*
I *HEARD* ABOUT DIANA! *GHASTLY* BUSINESS!
YOU-- SOUND LIKE YOU *KNEW* HER! I WASN'T *AWARE* OF THAT!
YES, I KNEW HER! SHE WAS ONE OF THE FIRST GIRLS I *HIRED* WHEN I OPENED THE *CLUB* LAST YEAR!
I BELIEVE JACK SAID YOU DRINK *VO?!*
YES, DIANA WAS ONE OF THE *BEST*--- ALTHOUGH I DID FINALLY HAVE TO *FIRE* HER! AFRAID SHE GOT A BIT *SERIOUS* ABOUT ME!
BUT THAT'S *ENOUGH* ABOUT HER! WHAT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT IS---
--- WELL, I UNDERSTAND YOU WERE INJECTED WITH A CERTAIN NEW *DRUG* IN VIET NAM!
IF THAT'S *TRUE,* I'D LIKE YOU TO TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU *CAN* ABOUT IT!

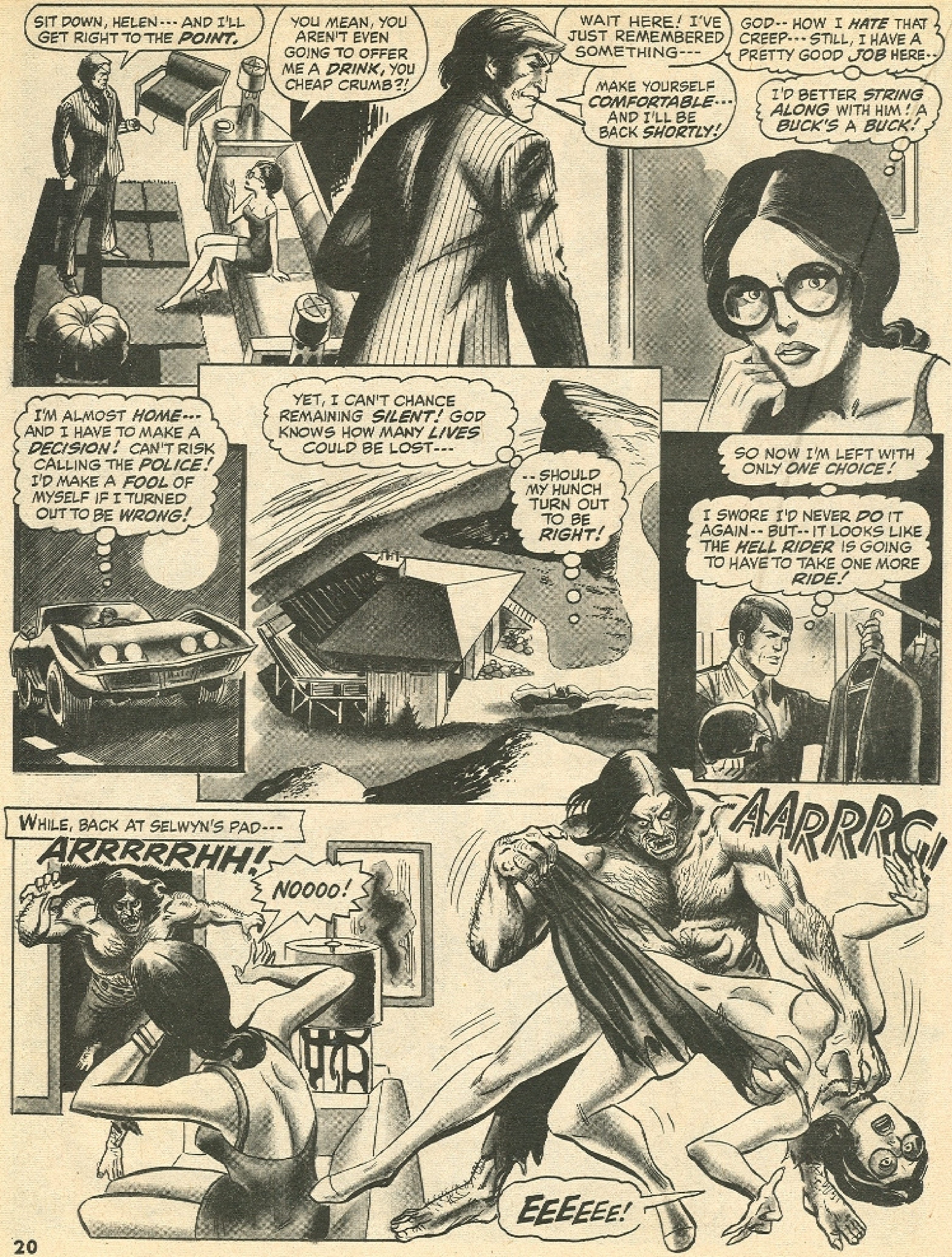

LATER THAT NIGHT---
LIKE, YOU HEARD, MAN, YOUR BROTHER IS INTERESTED IN THAT NUTTY DRUG THEY PUMPED ME FULL OF IN NAM!
HE DIDN'T SAY WHY-- JUST THAT HE WANTS ME TO COME TO HIS LAB IN A DAY OR TWO FOR SOME TESTS!
YEAH, BEING THE UP AND COMING HUGH HEFNER ISN'T ENOUGH FOR HIM---
HE THINKS HE HE'S GOT TO BECOME A GREAT CHEMIST, TOO!
BOWLING
WIN
DAISY
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE A LITTLE JEALOUS OF BIG BROTHER, JACK---
--BUT AS I RECALL, YOU ALWAYS WERE ---THOUGH I NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY!
AND, AT THAT SAME MOMENT, IN THE BASEMENT OF THE NIGHTOWL CLUB---
I'M SO CLOSE---
--IF ONLY REESE CAN BE OF SOME USE, I MAY BE ON THE VERGE OF THE GREATEST DISCOVERY OF THE CENTURY!
THERE'S MORE EXPERIMENTING TO DO---BUT ANOTHER FEW DAYS SHOULD TELL THE TALE!
HEAD FOR THE BROTHER'S DIGS, MAN! I SAW A COUPLE OF FINE FOXES WHO'LL BE GETTING OFF ABOUT NOW!
SOUNDS LIKE A GAS! THE WAY MY LOVE-LIFE'S BEEN GOING, I CAN USE ALL THE HELP I CAN GET!
HELLO, ROBIN?! LISTEN, HONEY-- HOW ABOUT HANGING AROUND AFTER WORK FOR A NIGHTCAP?
--YOU HAVE A DATE WITH JACK?!
SHOVE IT, DOLL!
WHO DOES SHE THINK SHE IS, PUTTING ME DOWN FOR MY SMALL-FRY BROTHER?!
KLUNK!

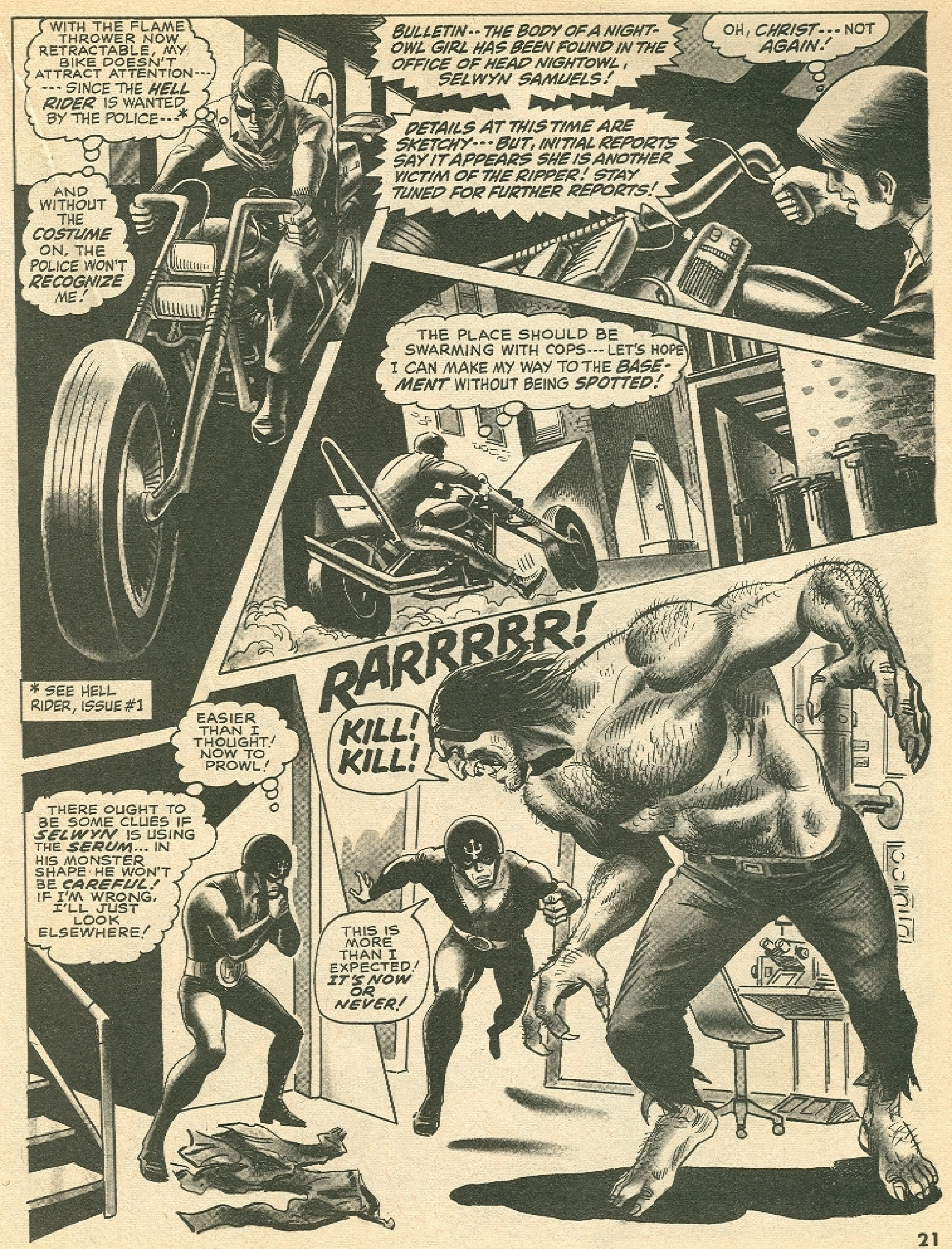

THEN, AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF DANCING AND BAR-HOPPING---
DOESN'T LOOK LIKE OLD JACK'S DOING SO BAD FOR HIMSELF---AND WITH A CHICK HIS BROTHER'S HOT FOR, AT THAT!
ALL OF WHICH REMINDS ME, I'VE GOT TO SWEAT OLD SELWYN---
---AND HOPE TO GOD HE DOESN'T DISCOVER WHAT THAT DRUG HAS DONE TO ME!
I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU IN, JACK--BUT I REALLY AM BEAT!
HOW ABOUT JUST A KISS FOR TONIGHT---AND I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU NEXT TIME?!
SURE, ROBIN! THEY DON'T CALL ME EASY-JACK FOR NOTHING!
mardi g
Marie
GUESS YOU CAN DROP ME BACK AT THE CLUB NOW! BIG BROTHER'S GIVEN ME A ROOM FOR MY STAY HERE---
---RIGHT DOWN IN THE BASEMENT BY HIS CREEPY LAB!
GIMME A RING TOMORROW, AND I'LL SEE WHAT KIND OF ACTION I CAN LINE UP FOR AFTER DARK!
IF I CAN WAKE UP BY THEN! I'M SO DEAD IT'LL TAKE AN ATOM BOMB TO GET ME UP TOMORROW!
SEE YOU, BUDDY!
SOME PEOPLE SLEEP, WHILE OTHERS...

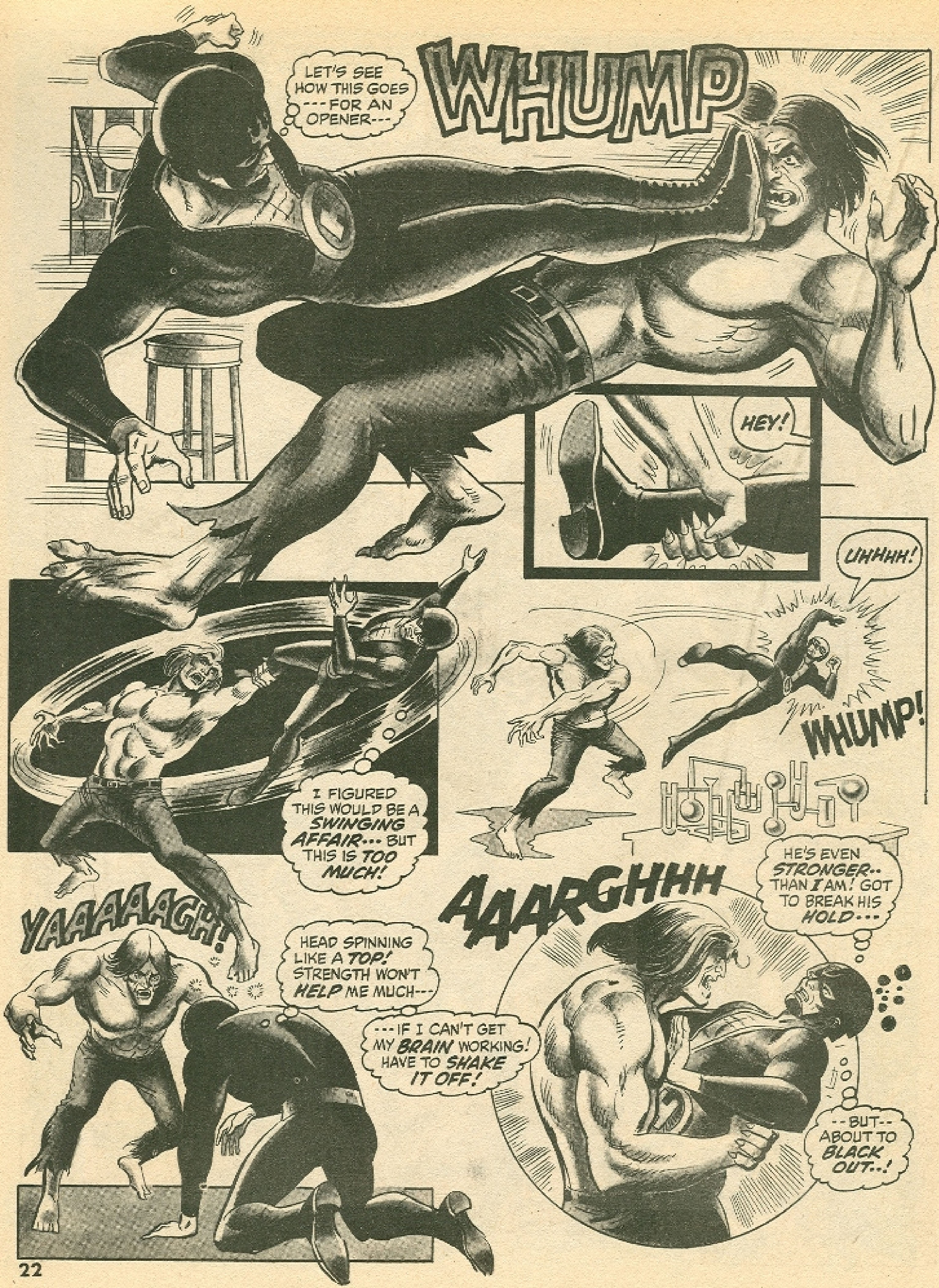

UHHHH--
ARRRHHH!
THEN, SOMETIME LATER IN A SMALL SANTA MONICA APARTMENT---
I HATED TO LIE TO JACK! I REALLY WANTED HIM TO COME IN---
BUT I THINK I'LL HAVE THAT OVER AND DONE WITH TOMORROW---
--BUT I CAN'T RISK HIM GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT ME UNTIL I'VE TAKEN CARE OF THE SELWYN SITUATION!
--AFTER I TELL SELWYN WHAT HE CAN DO WITH HIS LOUSY CLUB!
EEEEEE!
GROWRRR!
UUNNH! UUUNHHH! UUNNHHH!

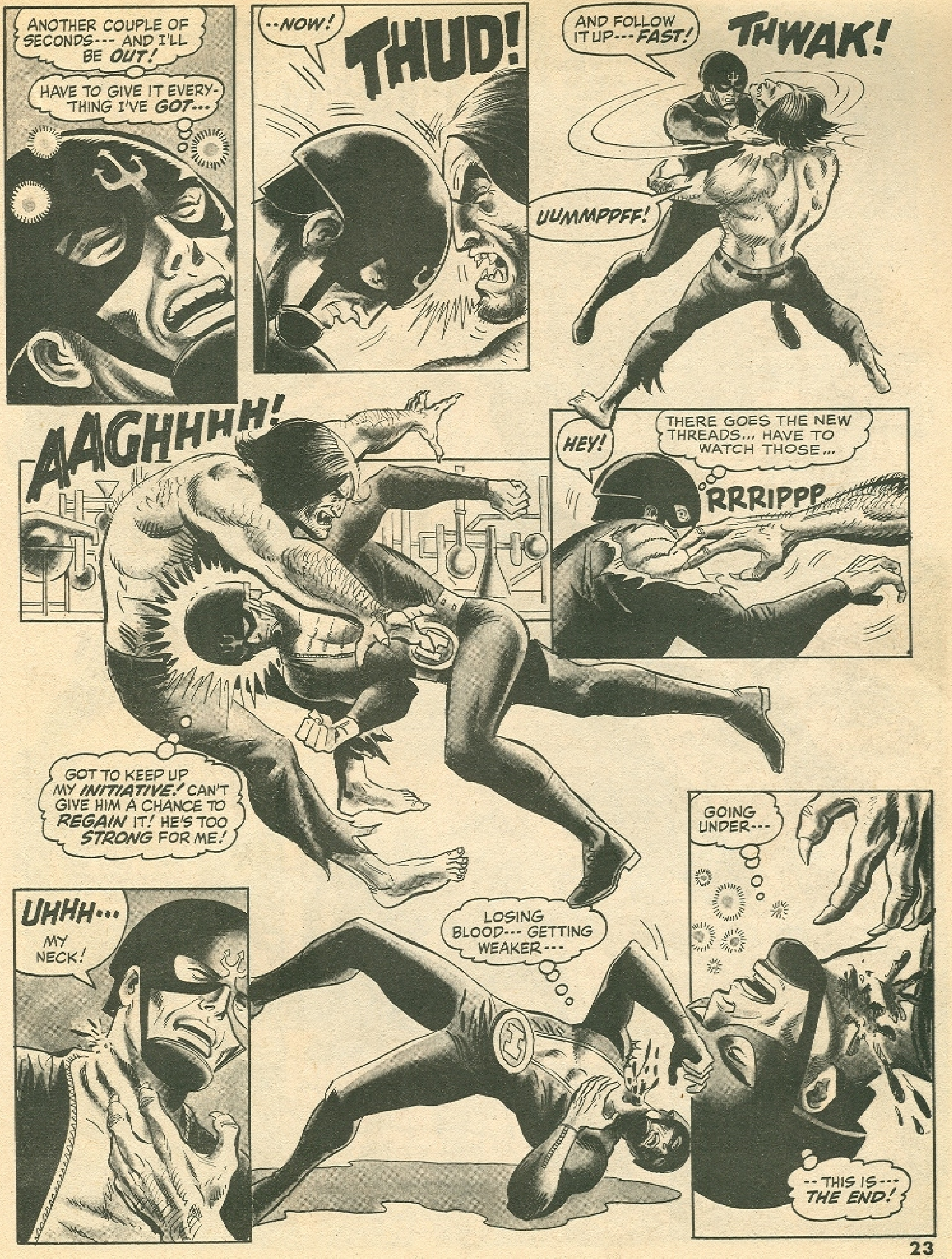

DAMN! DAMN! DAMN! ANOTHER GIRL LAST NIGHT! THAT MAKES FOUR IN LESS THAN A WEEK---
OH, HELLO, REESE! COME ON IN, BUT I WARN YOU, I'M IN A BLACK MOOD!
MORNING NEWS
RIPPER STRIKES AGAIN!
IT DOES SEEM LIKE THE RIPPER HAS IT IN FOR YOU! I MEAN, FIRST DIANA--- AND NOW THREE OF YOUR GIRLS!
IT SURE AS HELL DOES---AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT!
I'VE OFFERED A TEN GRAND REWARD---AND STILL THE COPS DON'T HAVE A CLUE!
WELL, THEY'RE BOUND TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING SOON!
NOW WHAT DO YOU SAY YOU TELL ME ABOUT THIS PROJECT OF YOURS?! MAYBE THAT'LL HELP YOU GET YOUR MIND OFF THE RIPPER!
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT! TO MAKE IT SIMPLE, I'VE BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH THIS DRUG---
--THE SAME ONE YOU WERE INJECTED WITH IN VIET NAM! I'VE BROKEN IT DOWN INTO FOUR DIFFERENT STRENGTHS!
THROUGH TESTS ON ANIMALS, I'VE DISCOVERED THAT, WHEN ADMINISTERED FULL-STRENGTH, IT CAUSES AMAZING CHANGES IN METABOLISM!
NOW THE ONLY REMAINING QUESTION IS--- WILL IT HAVE THE SAME EFFECT ON HUMANS?
IF IT DOES, I BELIEVE IT CAN BE USED TO PRODUCE A RACE OF--- WELL, SUPER-BEINGS--- MEN POSSESSED WITH MORE RAW STRENGTH THAN EVER BELIEVED POSSIBLE!
ALL I NEED IS A HUMAN GUINEA PIG... ONE WHO'S ALREADY USED THE DRUG LIKE YOU!
I DON'T KNOW?! I'LL HAVE TO THINK IT OVER!

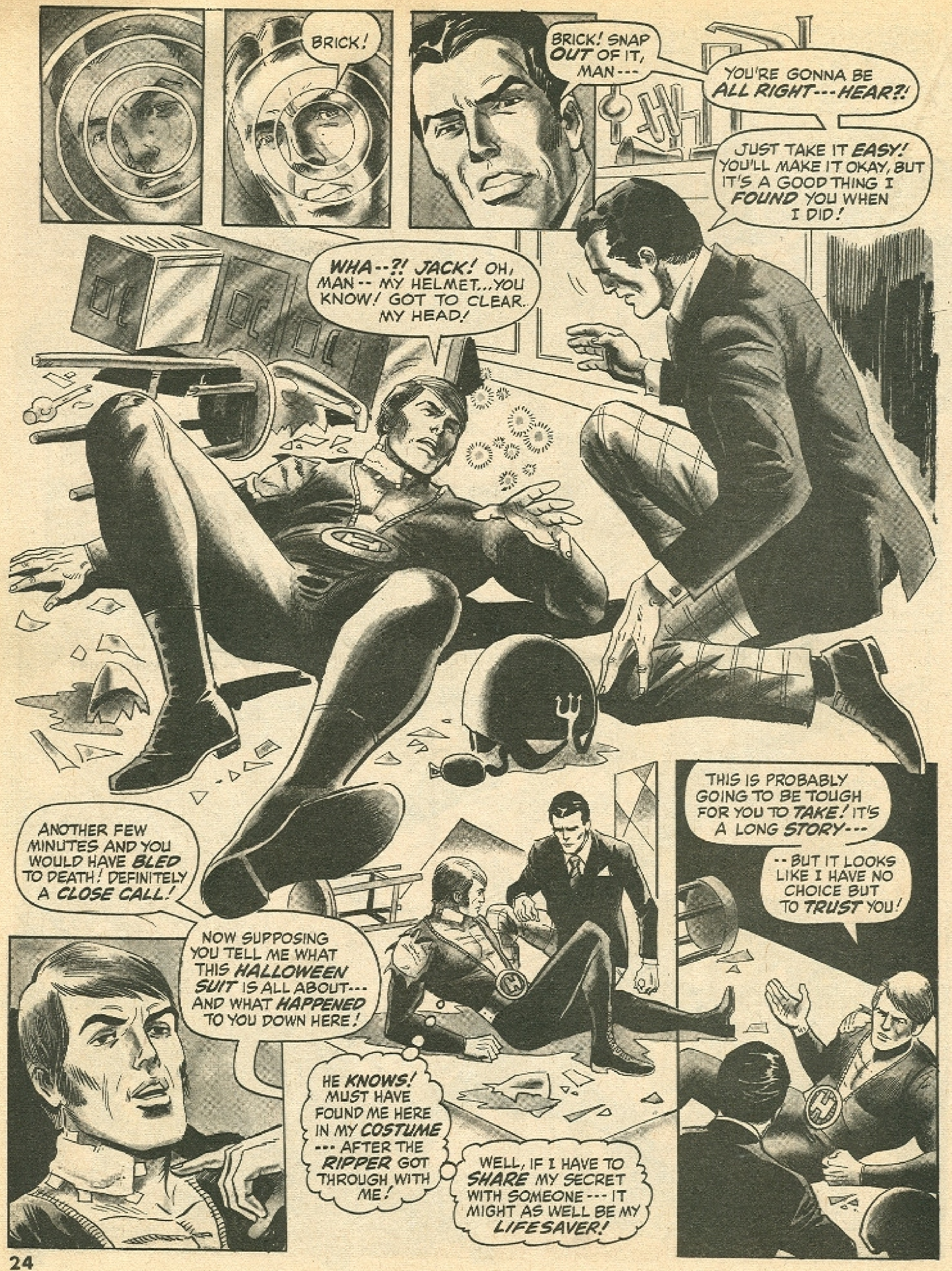

LATER...
SO THAT'S WHAT HE'S UP TO! HE THINKS HE CAN TURN ME INTO A MUSCLE-MAN OR SOMETHING!
WHOOO! THAT IS HEAVY! I THINK MY BIG BROTHER HAS FINALLY BLOWN HIS CORK!
HOPE I'M NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING! HELEN, I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU FOR A MOMENT IN MY OFFICE!
OH, WHAT IS THIS?! EVERYTIME I'M GROOVING ON SOMEBODY, YOU WANT TO SEE ME!
THIS IS BUSINESS, HELEN!
BETTER DO LIKE BIG BROTHER SAYS, BABY!
OH, OKAY, BUT DON'T FORGET OUR DATE TONIGHT!
NOT A CHANCE, HONEY-- UNLESS YOU RUN INTO THE RIPPER OR SOMETHING! HA!
AH, THE WHOLE THING ABOUT ALL THOSE CHICKS WORKING HERE IS JUST A CO-INCIDENCE!
THAT WASN'T TOO FUNNY, OLD BUDDY!
-- UNLESS MAYBE OL' BIG BROTHER'S KNOCKING 'EM OFF! HA HA HA!
SO MUCH FOR THE JOKES--- GOTTA SPLIT NOW!
RENDEZVOUS HERE AT O-EIGHT HUNDRED, RIGHT?
RIGHT!
WHAT IF JACK'S MORBID MIND HAS ACCIDENTALLY HIT UPON SOMETHING--- NAAAH!
-- STILL-- WHAT IF SELWYN HAS TRIED THE DRUG UPON HIMSELF--- AND IT'S EFFECT UPON HIM WAS DIFFERENT--- TURNING HIM INTO THE RIPPER?!

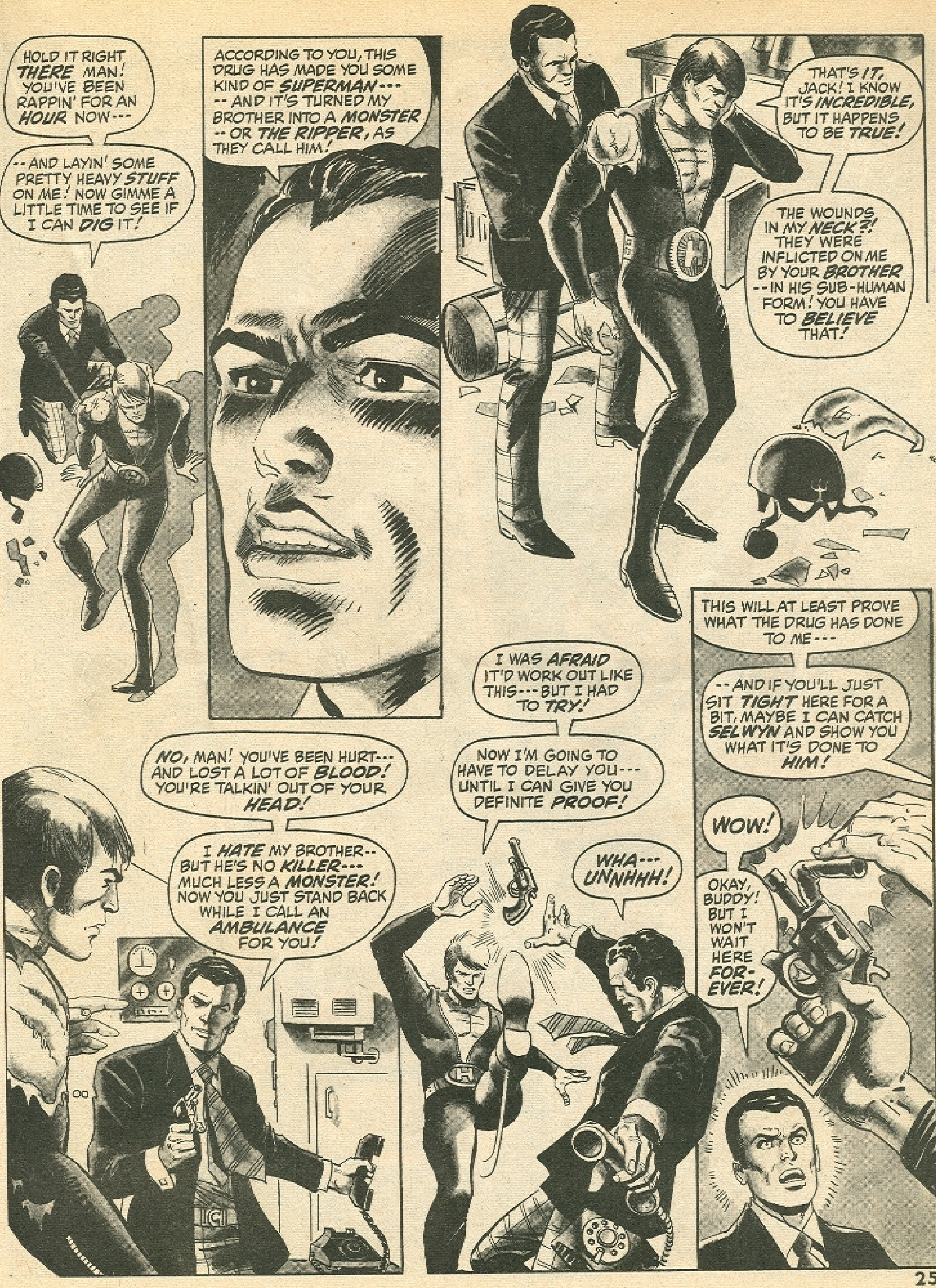

SIT DOWN, HELEN--- AND I'LL GET RIGHT TO THE POINT.
YOU MEAN, YOU AREN'T EVEN GOING TO OFFER ME A DRINK, YOU CHEAP CRUMB?!
WAIT HERE! I'VE JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHING---
MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE--- AND I'LL BE BACK SHORTLY!
GOD-- HOW I HATE THAT CREEP--- STILL, I HAVE A PRETTY GOOD JOB HERE--
I'D BETTER STRING ALONG WITH HIM! A BUCK'S A BUCK!
I'M ALMOST HOME--- AND I HAVE TO MAKE A DECISION! CAN'T RISK CALLING THE POLICE! I'D MAKE A FOOL OF MYSELF IF I TURNED OUT TO BE WRONG!
YET, I CAN'T CHANCE REMAINING SILENT! GOD KNOWS HOW MANY LIVES COULD BE LOST---
--SHOULD MY HUNCH TURN OUT TO BE RIGHT!
SO NOW I'M LEFT WITH ONLY ONE CHOICE!
I SWORE I'D NEVER DO IT AGAIN-- BUT-- IT LOOKS LIKE THE HELL RIDER IS GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE ONE MORE RIDE!
WHILE, BACK AT SELWYN'S PAD---
ARRRRRHH!
NOOOO!
AARRRG!
EEEeee!

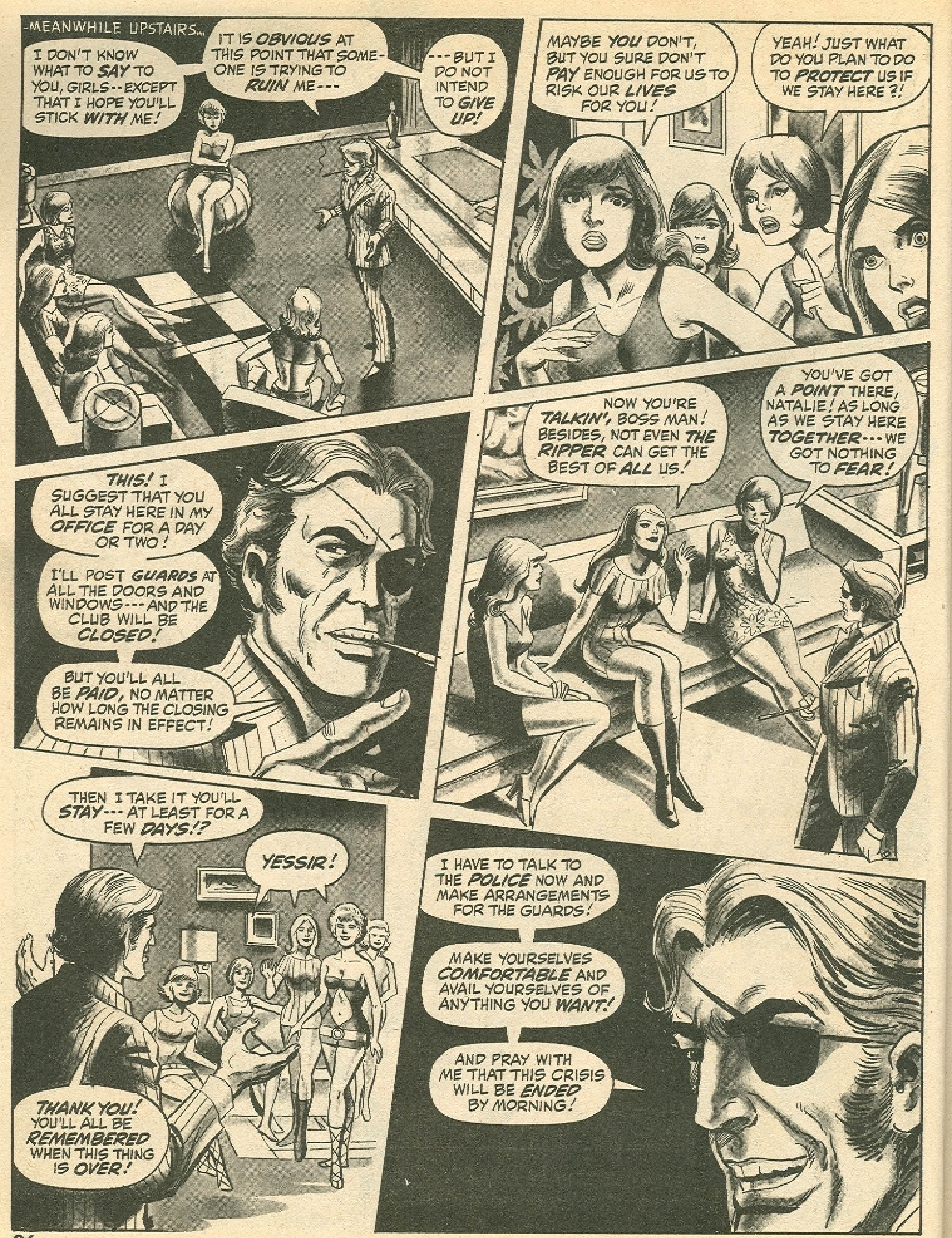

WITH THE FLAME THROWER NOW RETRACTABLE, MY BIKE DOESN'T ATTRACT ATTENTION--- --- SINCE THE HELL RIDER IS WANTED BY THE POLICE---*
AND WITHOUT THE COSTUME ON, THE POLICE WON'T RECOGNIZE ME!
BULLETIN--THE BODY OF A NIGHT-OWL GIRL HAS BEEN FOUND IN THE OFFICE OF HEAD NIGHTOWL, SELWYN SAMUELS!
OH, CHRIST---NOT AGAIN!
DETAILS AT THIS TIME ARE SKETCHY---BUT, INITIAL REPORTS SAY IT APPEARS SHE IS ANOTHER VICTIM OF THE RIPPER! STAY TUNED FOR FURTHER REPORTS!
THE PLACE SHOULD BE SWARMING WITH COPS---LET'S HOPE I CAN MAKE MY WAY TO THE BASEMENT WITHOUT BEING SPOTTED!
* SEE HELL RIDER, ISSUE #1
EASIER THAN I THOUGHT! NOW TO PROWL!
THERE OUGHT TO BE SOME CLUES IF SELWYN IS USING THE SERUM... IN HIS MONSTER SHAPE HE WON'T BE CAREFUL! IF I'M WRONG, I'LL JUST LOOK ELSEWHERE!
RARRRRR!
KILL! KILL!
THIS IS MORE THAN I EXPECTED! IT'S NOW OR NEVER!

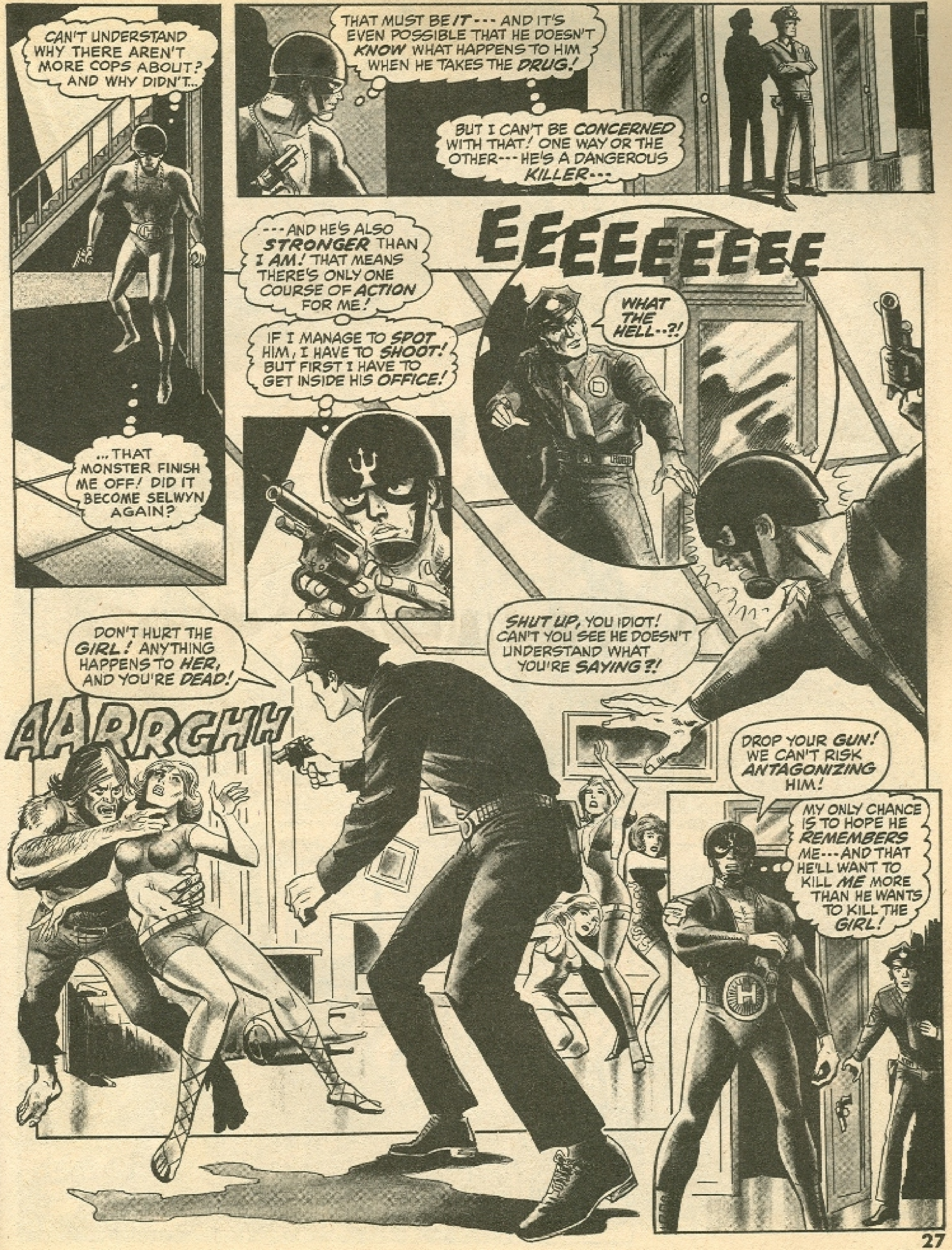

LET'S SEE HOW THIS GOES ---FOR AN OPENER---
WHUMP
HEY!
I FIGURED THIS WOULD BE A *SWINGING AFFAIR*--- BUT THIS IS *TOO MUCH!*
UHHHH!
WHUMP!
YAAAAAAGH!
HEAD SPINNING LIKE A *TOP!* STRENGTH WON'T *HELP* ME MUCH---
---IF I CAN'T GET MY *BRAIN* WORKING! HAVE TO *SHAKE IT OFF!*
AAARGHHH
HE'S EVEN *STRONGER*.. THAN *I* AM! GOT TO BREAK HIS *HOLD*---
--BUT-- ABOUT TO *BLACK OUT*..!

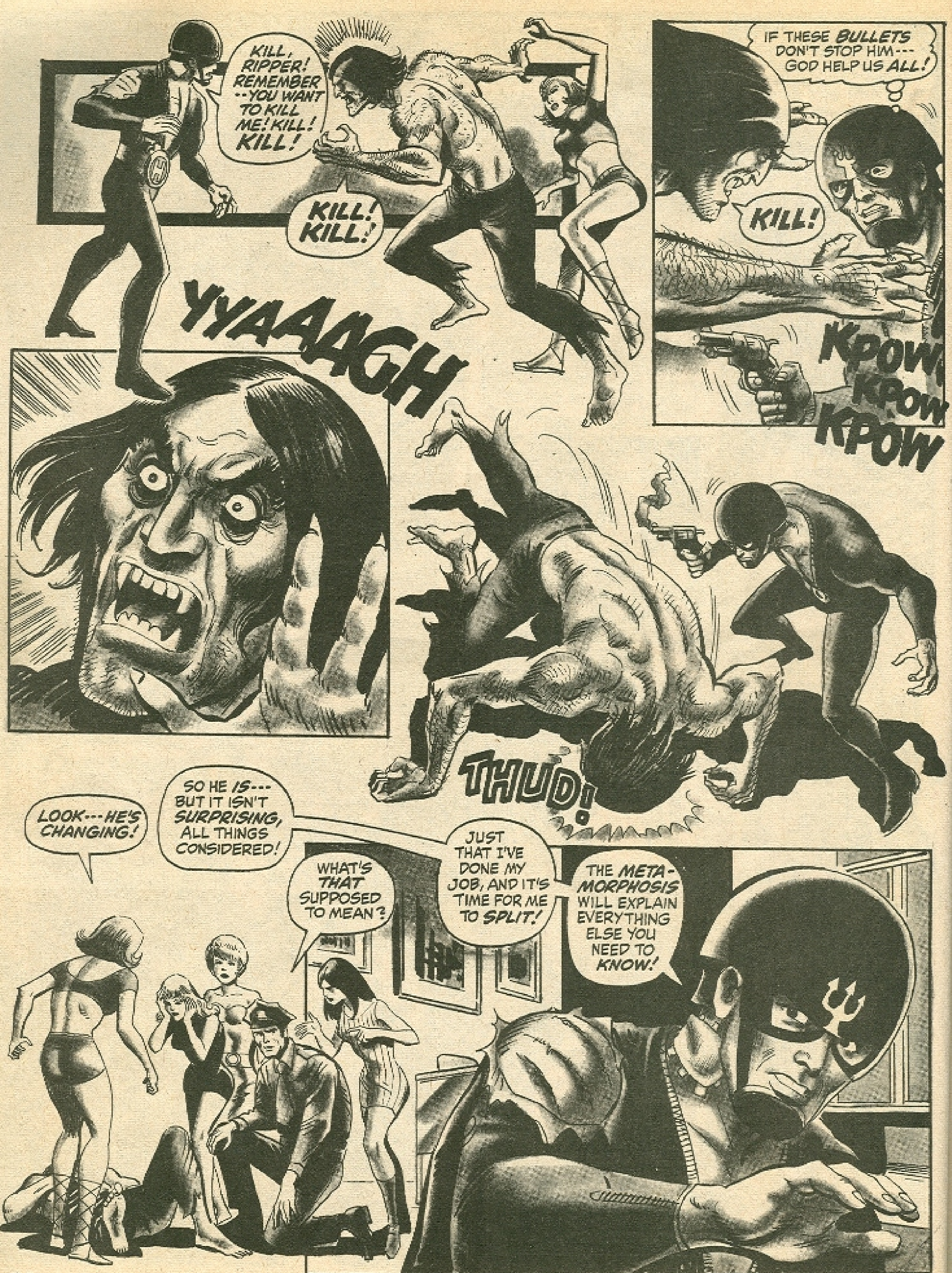

ANOTHER COUPLE OF SECONDS--- AND I'LL BE *OUT*!
HAVE TO GIVE IT EVERYTHING I'VE *GOT*...
--*NOW!*
THUD!
AND FOLLOW IT UP---*FAST!*
THWAK!
UUMMPPFF!
AAGHHHH!
GOT TO KEEP UP MY *INITIATIVE!* CAN'T GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO *REGAIN* IT! HE'S TOO *STRONG* FOR ME!
HEY!
THERE GOES THE NEW THREADS... HAVE TO WATCH THOSE...
RRRIPPP
UHHH...
MY NECK!
LOSING BLOOD--- GETTING WEAKER---
GOING UNDER---
--THIS IS--- *THE END!*

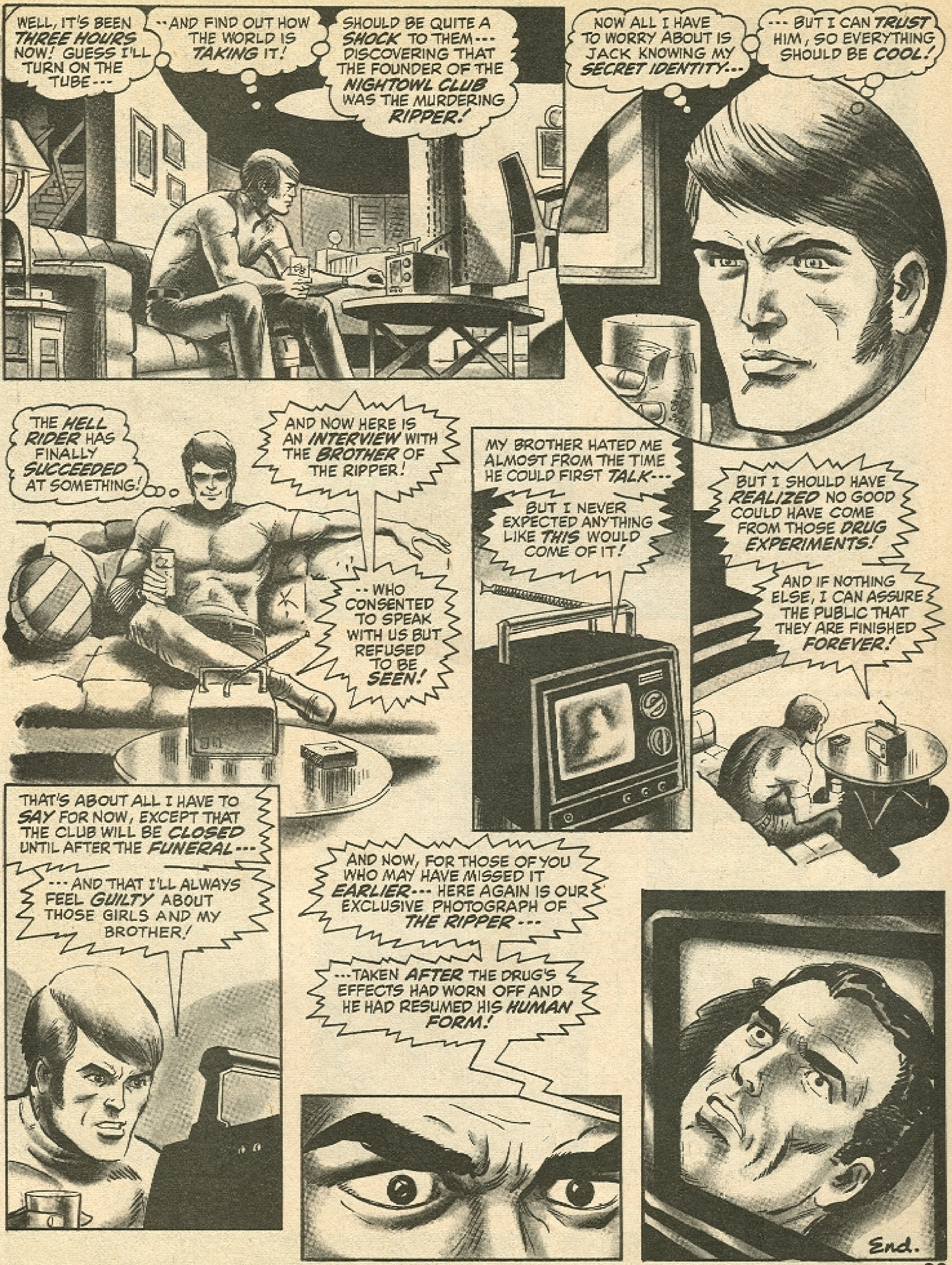

BRICK!
BRICK! SNAP OUT OF IT, MAN---
YOU'RE GONNA BE ALL RIGHT---HEAR?!
JUST TAKE IT EASY! YOU'LL MAKE IT OKAY, BUT IT'S A GOOD THING I FOUND YOU WHEN I DID!
WHA--?! JACK! OH, MAN-- MY HELMET...YOU KNOW! GOT TO CLEAR MY HEAD!
ANOTHER FEW MINUTES AND YOU WOULD HAVE BLED TO DEATH! DEFINITELY A CLOSE CALL!
NOW SUPPOSING YOU TELL ME WHAT THIS HALLOWEEN SUIT IS ALL ABOUT--- AND WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU DOWN HERE!
HE KNOWS! MUST HAVE FOUND ME HERE IN MY COSTUME --- AFTER THE RIPPER GOT THROUGH WITH ME!
WELL, IF I HAVE TO SHARE MY SECRET WITH SOMEONE --- IT MIGHT AS WELL BE MY LIFESAVER!
THIS IS PROBABLY GOING TO BE TOUGH FOR YOU TO TAKE! IT'S A LONG STORY---
--BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TRUST YOU!


HOLD IT RIGHT *THERE* MAN! YOU'VE BEEN RAPPIN' FOR AN *HOUR* NOW---
--AND LAYIN' SOME PRETTY HEAVY *STUFF* ON ME! NOW GIMME A LITTLE TIME TO SEE IF I CAN *DIG* IT!
ACCORDING TO YOU, THIS DRUG HAS MADE YOU SOME KIND OF *SUPERMAN*--- --AND IT'S TURNED MY BROTHER INTO A *MONSTER* --OR *THE RIPPER*, AS THEY CALL HIM!
THAT'S *IT*, JACK! I KNOW IT'S *INCREDIBLE*, BUT IT HAPPENS TO BE *TRUE!*
THE WOUNDS IN MY *NECK?!* THEY WERE INFLICTED ON ME BY YOUR *BROTHER* --IN HIS SUB-HUMAN FORM! YOU HAVE TO *BELIEVE* THAT!
NO, MAN! YOU'VE BEEN HURT--- AND LOST A LOT OF *BLOOD!* YOU'RE TALKIN' OUT OF YOUR *HEAD!*
I *HATE* MY BROTHER-- BUT HE'S NO *KILLER*--- MUCH LESS A *MONSTER!* NOW YOU JUST STAND BACK WHILE I CALL AN *AMBULANCE* FOR YOU!
I WAS *AFRAID* IT'D WORK OUT LIKE THIS---BUT I HAD TO *TRY!*
NOW I'M GOING TO HAVE TO DELAY YOU--- UNTIL I CAN GIVE YOU DEFINITE *PROOF!*
WHA--- UNNHHH!
THIS WILL AT LEAST PROVE WHAT THE DRUG HAS DONE TO ME---
--AND IF YOU'LL JUST SIT *TIGHT* HERE FOR A BIT, MAYBE I CAN CATCH *SELWYN* AND SHOW YOU WHAT IT'S DONE TO *HIM!*
WOW!
OKAY, BUDDY! BUT I WON'T WAIT HERE *FOR-EVER!*


-MEANWHILE UPSTAIRS...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO YOU, GIRLS--EXCEPT THAT I HOPE YOU'LL STICK WITH ME!
IT IS OBVIOUS AT THIS POINT THAT SOMEONE IS TRYING TO RUIN ME---
---BUT I DO NOT INTEND TO GIVE UP!
MAYBE YOU DON'T, BUT YOU SURE DON'T PAY ENOUGH FOR US TO RISK OUR LIVES FOR YOU!
YEAH! JUST WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO TO PROTECT US IF WE STAY HERE ?!
THIS! I SUGGEST THAT YOU ALL STAY HERE IN MY OFFICE FOR A DAY OR TWO!
I'LL POST GUARDS AT ALL THE DOORS AND WINDOWS---AND THE CLUB WILL BE CLOSED!
BUT YOU'LL ALL BE PAID, NO MATTER HOW LONG THE CLOSING REMAINS IN EFFECT!
NOW YOU'RE TALKIN', BOSS MAN! BESIDES, NOT EVEN THE RIPPER CAN GET THE BEST OF ALL US!
YOU'VE GOT A POINT THERE, NATALIE! AS LONG AS WE STAY HERE TOGETHER---WE GOT NOTHING TO FEAR!
THEN I TAKE IT YOU'LL STAY---AT LEAST FOR A FEW DAYS!?
YESSIR!
THANK YOU! YOU'LL ALL BE REMEMBERED WHEN THIS THING IS OVER!
I HAVE TO TALK TO THE POLICE NOW AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE GUARDS!
MAKE YOURSELVES COMFORTABLE AND AVAIL YOURSELVES OF ANYTHING YOU WANT!
AND PRAY WITH ME THAT THIS CRISIS WILL BE ENDED BY MORNING!

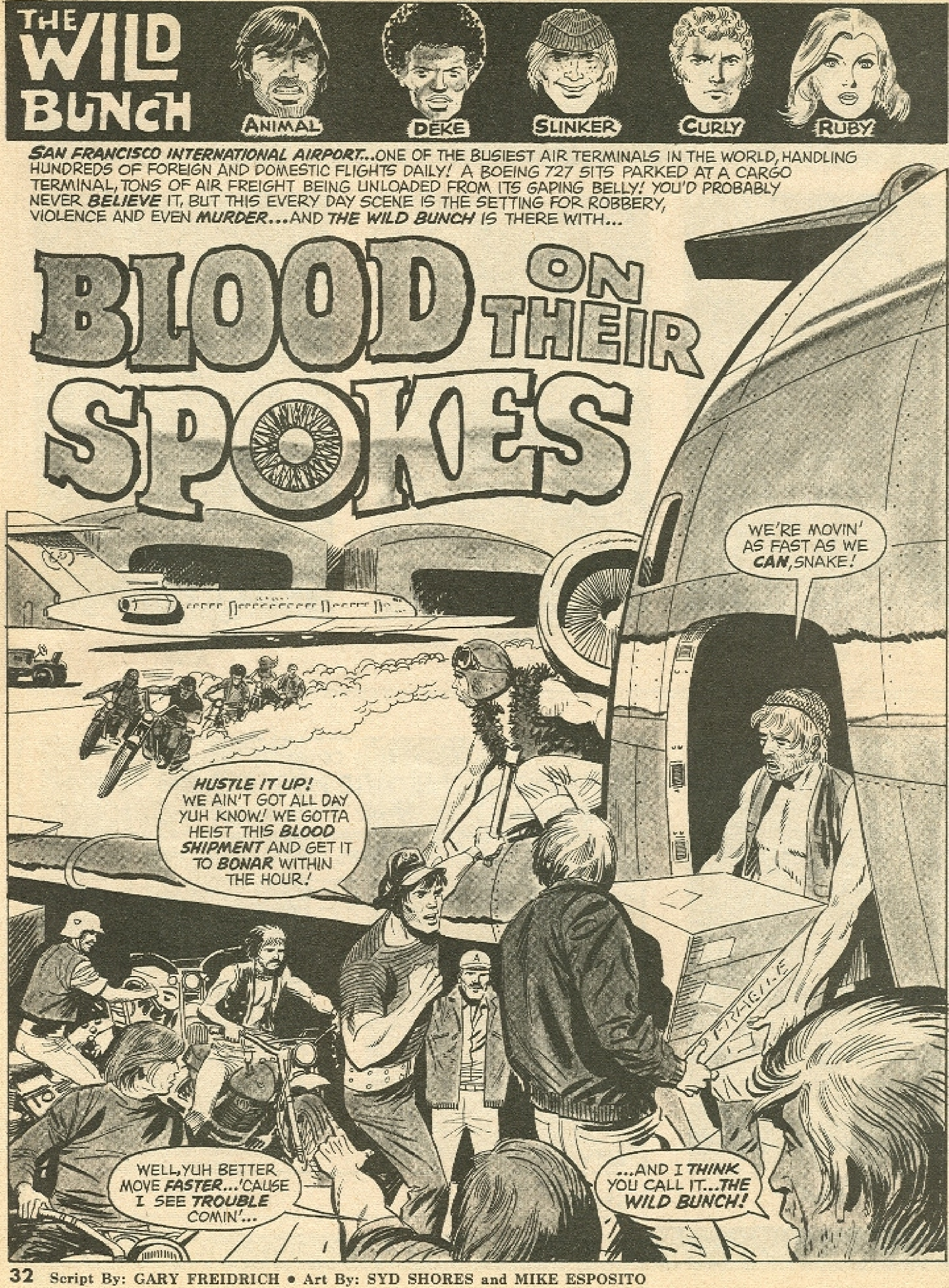

CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THERE AREN'T MORE COPS ABOUT? AND WHY DIDN'T...
THAT MUST BE IT --- AND IT'S EVEN POSSIBLE THAT HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO HIM WHEN HE TAKES THE DRUG!
BUT I CAN'T BE CONCERNED WITH THAT! ONE WAY OR THE OTHER--- HE'S A DANGEROUS KILLER---
...THAT MONSTER FINISH ME OFF! DID IT BECOME SELWYN AGAIN?
---AND HE'S ALSO STRONGER THAN I AM! THAT MEANS THERE'S ONLY ONE COURSE OF ACTION FOR ME!
IF I MANAGE TO SPOT HIM, I HAVE TO SHOOT! BUT FIRST I HAVE TO GET INSIDE HIS OFFICE!
EEEEEEEEE
WHAT THE HELL--?!
SHUT UP, YOU IDIOT! CAN'T YOU SEE HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?!
DON'T HURT THE GIRL! ANYTHING HAPPENS TO HER, AND YOU'RE DEAD!
AARRGHH
DROP YOUR GUN! WE CAN'T RISK ANTAGONIZING HIM!
MY ONLY CHANCE IS TO HOPE HE REMEMBERS ME---AND THAT HE'LL WANT TO KILL ME MORE THAN HE WANTS TO KILL THE GIRL!


KILL, RIPPER! REMEMBER --YOU WANT TO KILL ME! KILL! KILL!
KILL! KILL!
YYAAAGH
IF THESE BULLETS DON'T STOP HIM--- GOD HELP US ALL!
KILL!
KPOW KPOW KPOW
THUD!
LOOK---HE'S CHANGING!
SO HE IS--- BUT IT ISN'T SURPRISING, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED!
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
JUST THAT I'VE DONE MY JOB, AND IT'S TIME FOR ME TO SPLIT!
THE METAMORPHOSIS WILL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW!

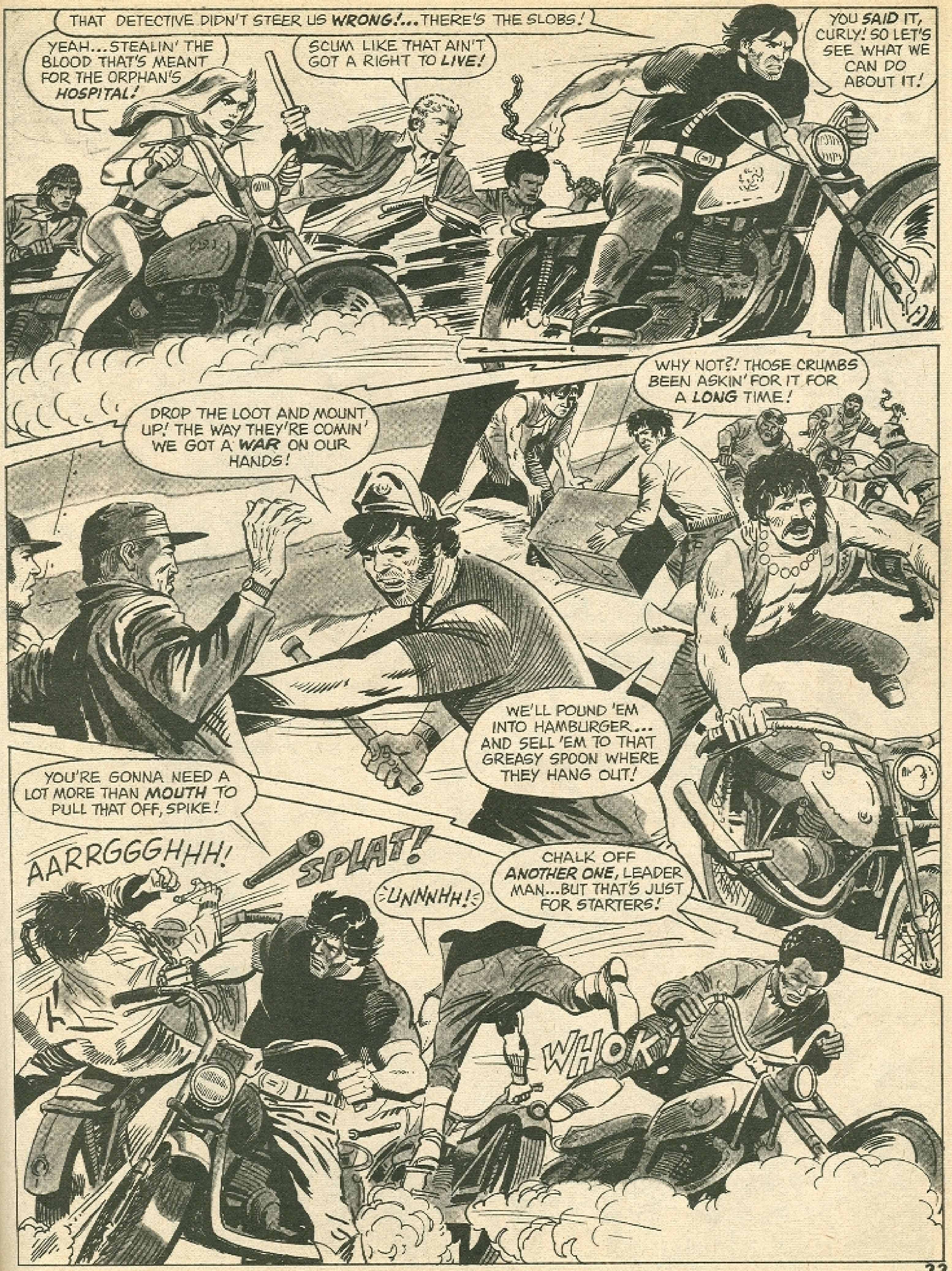

WELL, IT'S BEEN THREE HOURS NOW! GUESS I'LL TURN ON THE TUBE---
--AND FIND OUT HOW THE WORLD IS TAKING IT!
SHOULD BE QUITE A SHOCK TO THEM--- DISCOVERING THAT THE FOUNDER OF THE NIGHTOWL CLUB WAS THE MURDERING RIPPER!
NOW ALL I HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IS JACK KNOWING MY SECRET IDENTITY...
--- BUT I CAN TRUST HIM, SO EVERYTHING SHOULD BE COOL!
THE HELL RIDER HAS FINALLY SUCCEEDED AT SOMETHING!
AND NOW HERE IS AN INTERVIEW WITH THE BROTHER OF THE RIPPER!
-- WHO CONSENTED TO SPEAK WITH US BUT REFUSED TO BE SEEN!
MY BROTHER HATED ME ALMOST FROM THE TIME HE COULD FIRST TALK---
BUT I NEVER EXPECTED ANYTHING LIKE THIS WOULD COME OF IT!
BUT I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED NO GOOD COULD HAVE COME FROM THOSE DRUG EXPERIMENTS!
AND IF NOTHING ELSE, I CAN ASSURE THE PUBLIC THAT THEY ARE FINISHED FOREVER!
THAT'S ABOUT ALL I HAVE TO SAY FOR NOW, EXCEPT THAT THE CLUB WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL AFTER THE FUNERAL---
--- AND THAT I'LL ALWAYS FEEL GUILTY ABOUT THOSE GIRLS AND MY BROTHER!
AND NOW, FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO MAY HAVE MISSED IT EARLIER--- HERE AGAIN IS OUR EXCLUSIVE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE RIPPER---
---TAKEN AFTER THE DRUG'S EFFECTS HAD WORN OFF AND HE HAD RESUMED HIS HUMAN FORM!
End.

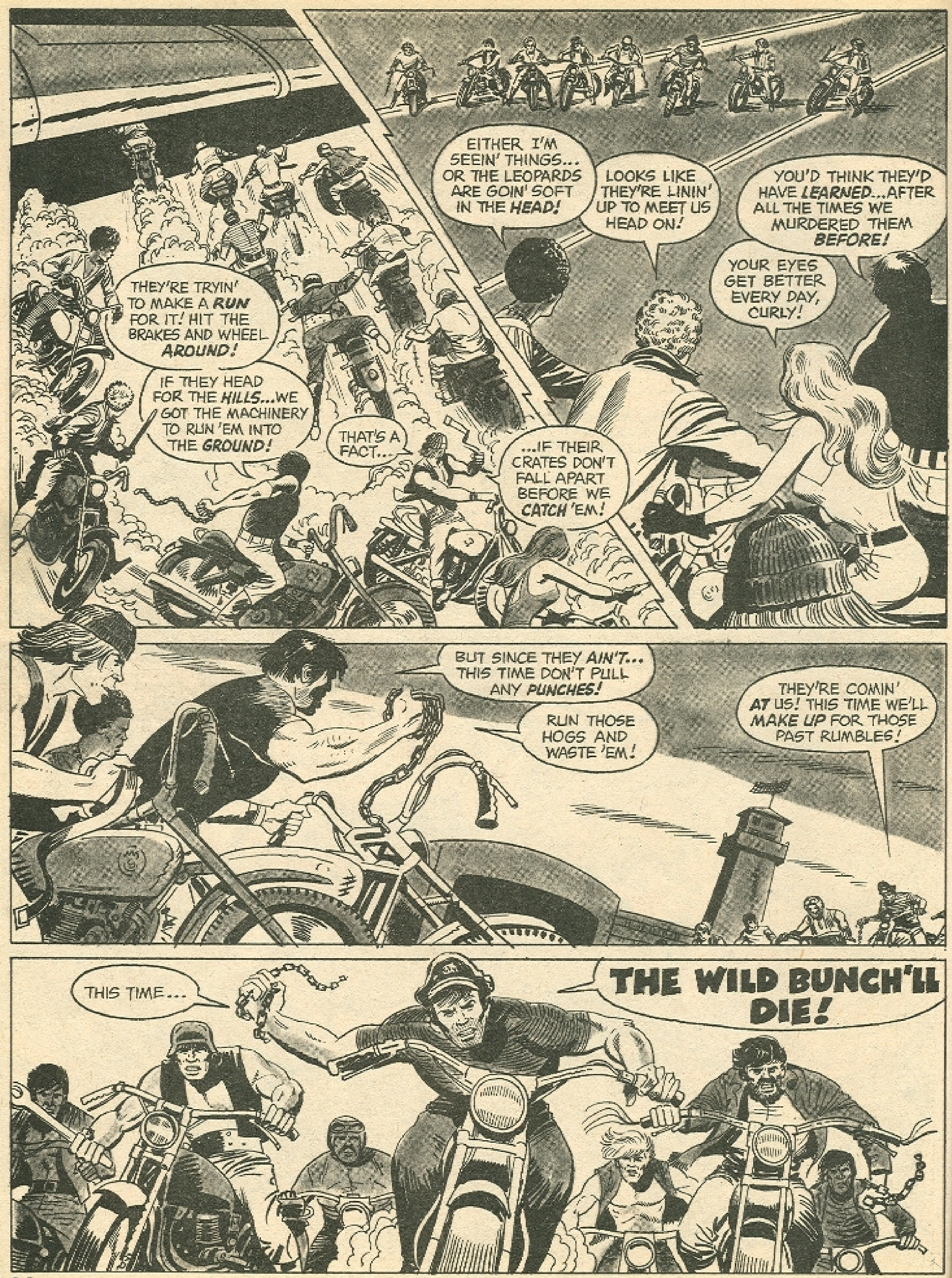
BLOOD ON THEIR SPOKES

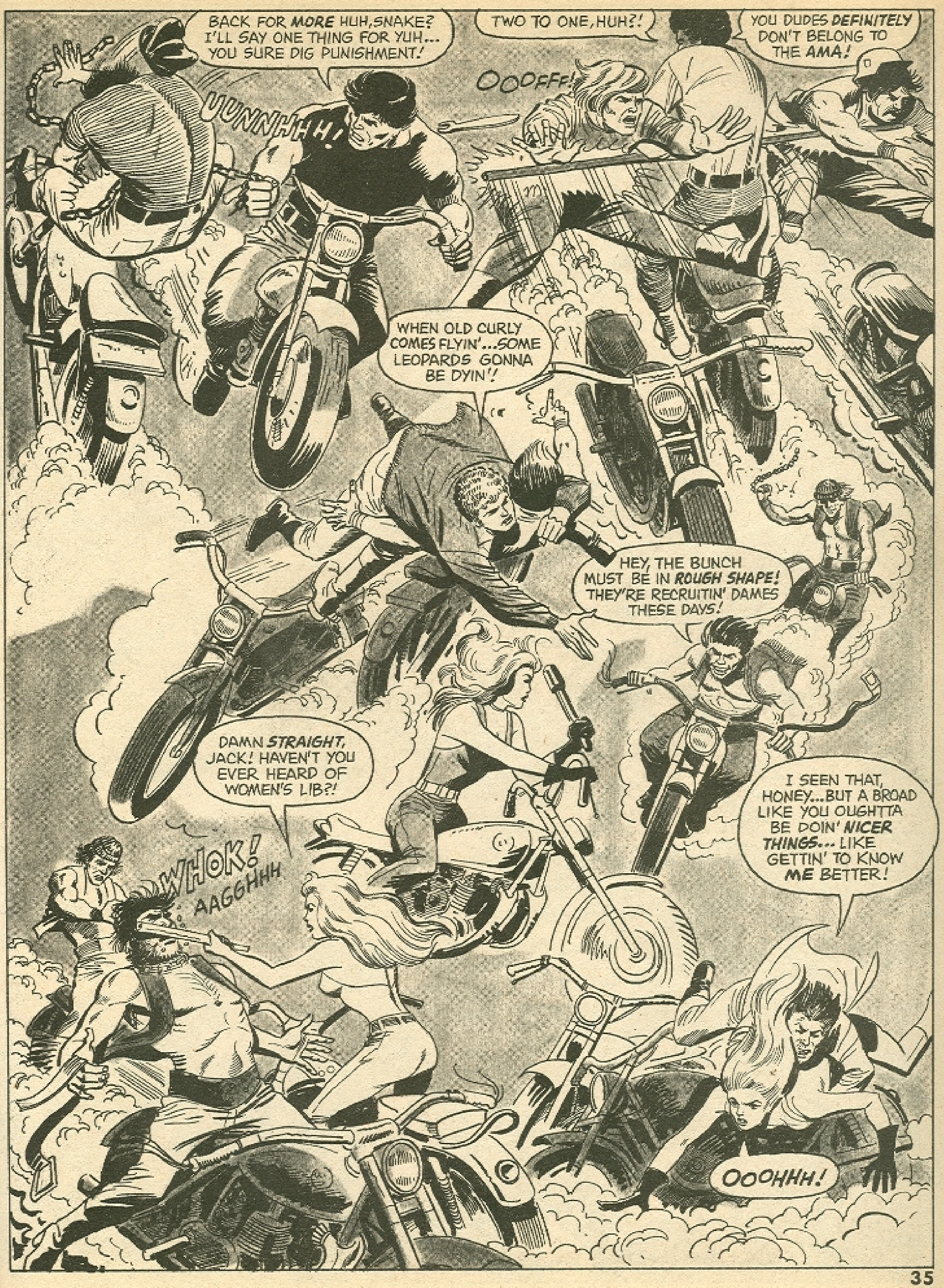
SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT...ONE OF THE BUSIEST AIR TERMINALS IN THE WORLD, HANDLING HUNDREDS OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC FLIGHTS DAILY! A BOEING 727 SITS PARKED AT A CARGO TERMINAL, TONS OF AIR FREIGHT BEING UNLOADED FROM ITS GAPING BELLY! YOU'D PROBABLY NEVER *BELIEVE* IT, BUT THIS EVERY DAY SCENE IS THE SETTING FOR ROBBERY, VIOLENCE AND EVEN *MURDER*...AND *THE WILD BUNCH* IS THERE WITH...

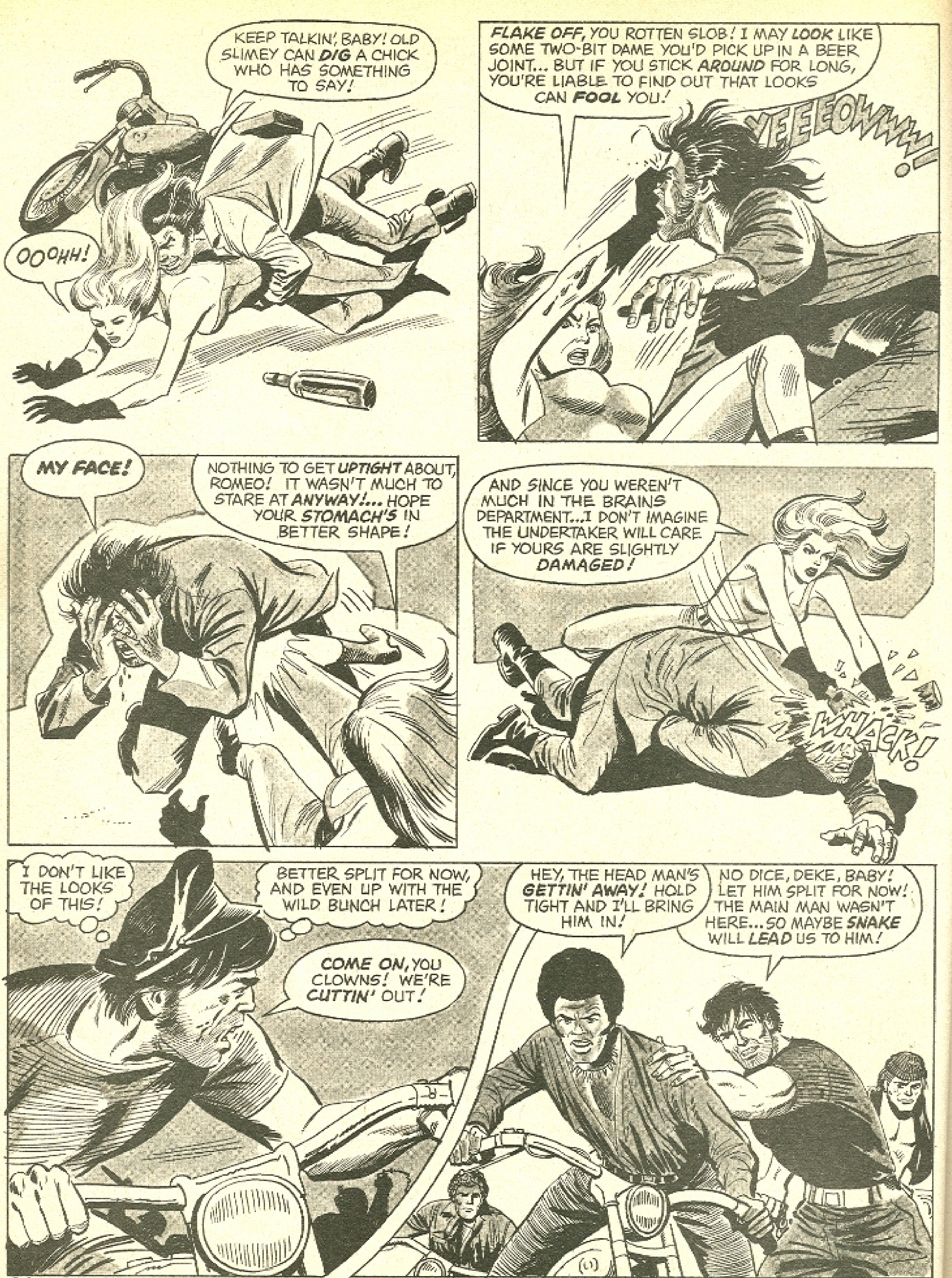

THE WILD BUNCH
ANIMAL
DEKE
SLINKER
CURLY
RUBY
WE'RE MOVIN' AS FAST AS WE CAN, SNAKE!
HUSTLE IT UP! WE AIN'T GOT ALL DAY YUH KNOW! WE GOTTA HEIST THIS BLOOD SHIPMENT AND GET IT TO BONAR WITHIN THE HOUR!
FRAGILE
WELL, YUH BETTER MOVE FASTER...'CAUSE I SEE TROUBLE COMIN'...
...AND I THINK YOU CALL IT...THE WILD BUNCH!

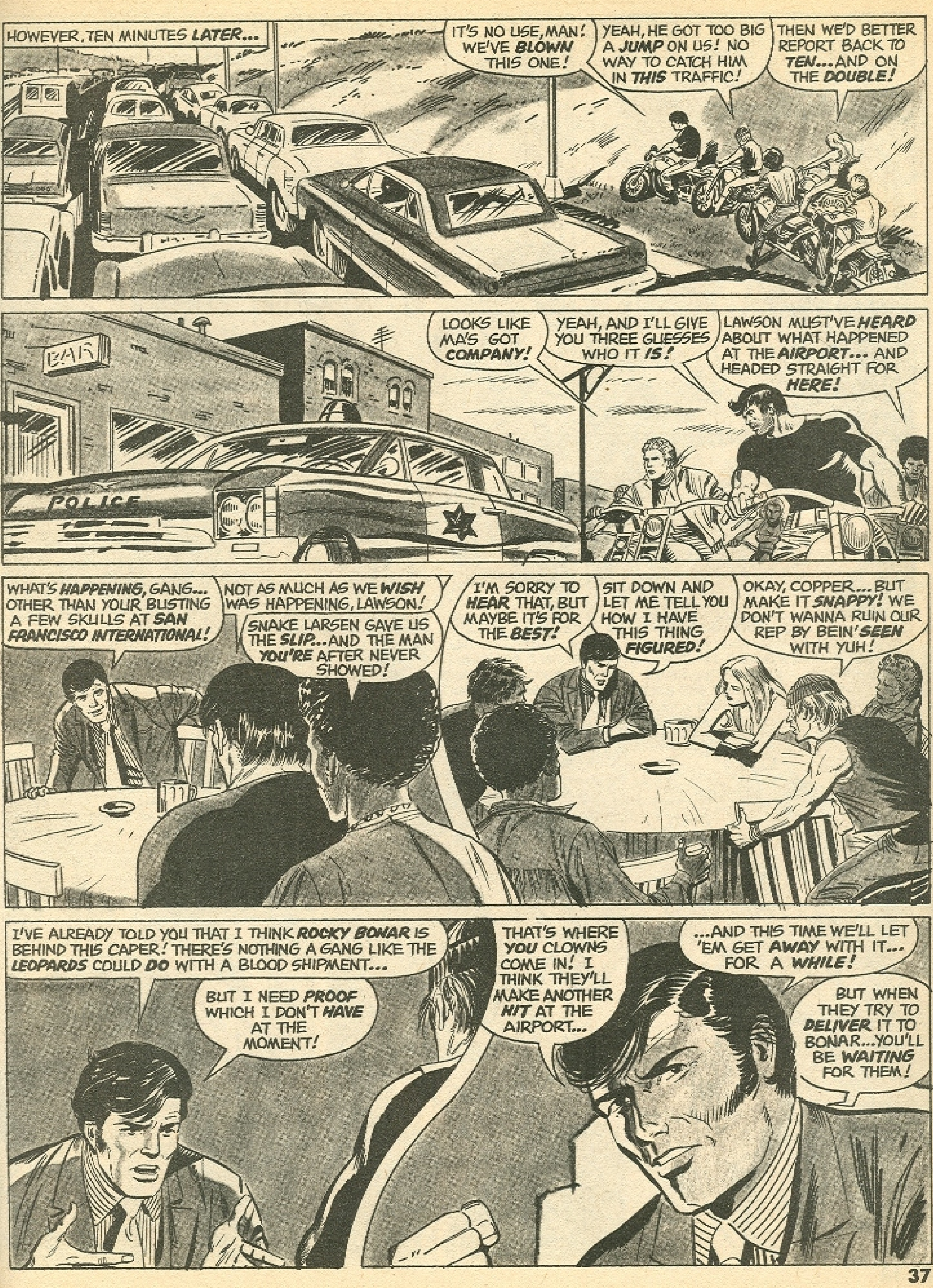
Script By: GARY FREIDRICH • Art By: SYD SHORES and MIKE ESPOSITO

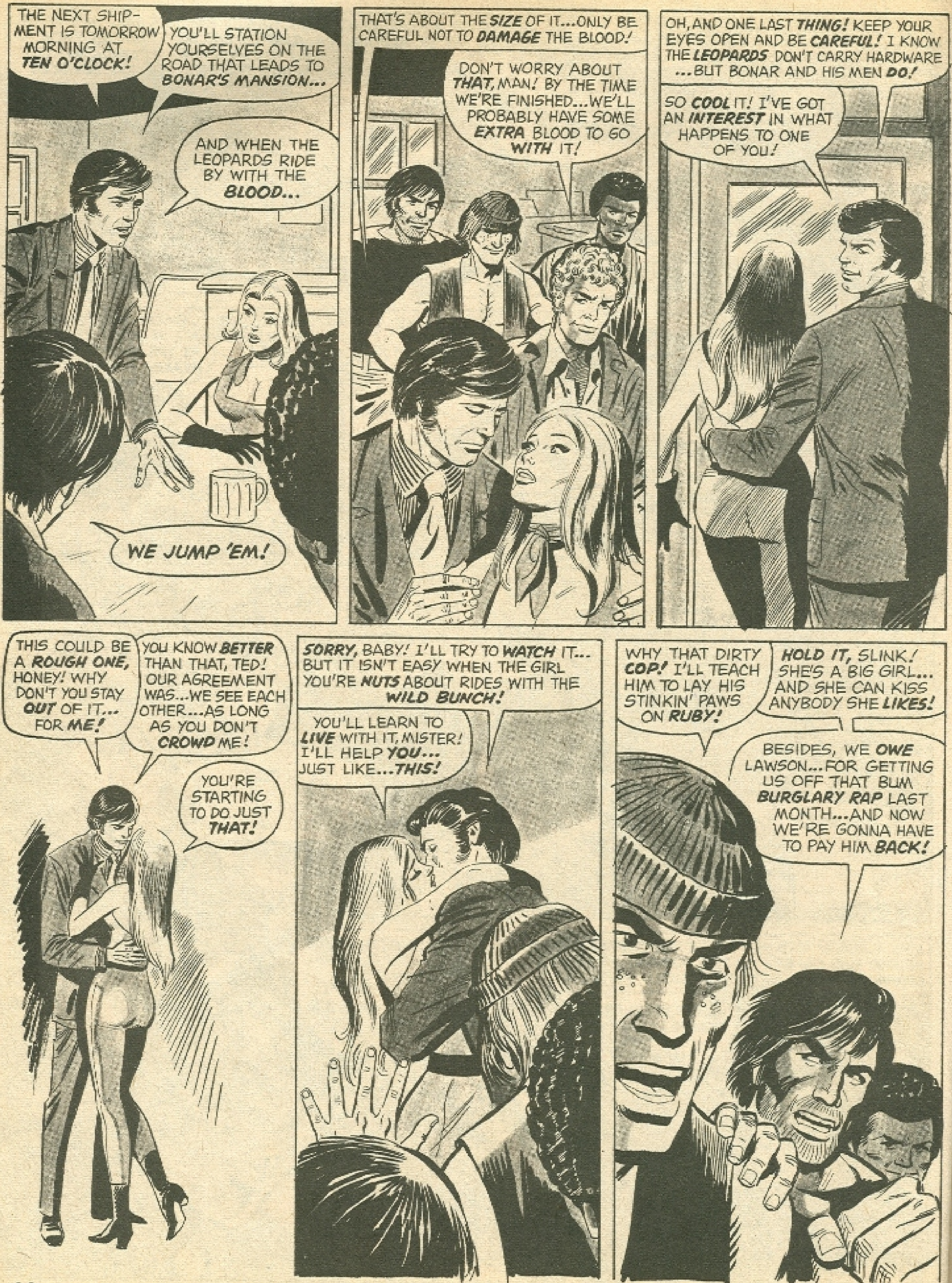

THAT DETECTIVE DIDN'T STEER US *WRONG!*... THERE'S THE SLOBS!
YEAH... STEALIN' THE BLOOD THAT'S MEANT FOR THE ORPHAN'S *HOSPITAL!*
SCUM LIKE THAT AIN'T GOT A RIGHT TO *LIVE!*
YOU *SAID* IT, CURLY! SO LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT!
DROP THE LOOT AND MOUNT UP! THE WAY THEY'RE COMIN' WE GOT A *WAR* ON OUR HANDS!
WHY NOT?! THOSE CRUMBS BEEN ASKIN' FOR IT FOR A *LONG* TIME!
WE'LL POUND 'EM INTO HAMBURGER... AND SELL 'EM TO THAT GREASY SPOON WHERE THEY HANG OUT!
YOU'RE GONNA NEED A LOT MORE THAN *MOUTH* TO PULL THAT OFF, SPIKE!
AARRGGGHHH!
SPLAT!
UNNNHH!
CHALK OFF *ANOTHER ONE*, LEADER MAN... BUT THAT'S JUST FOR STARTERS!
WHOK!

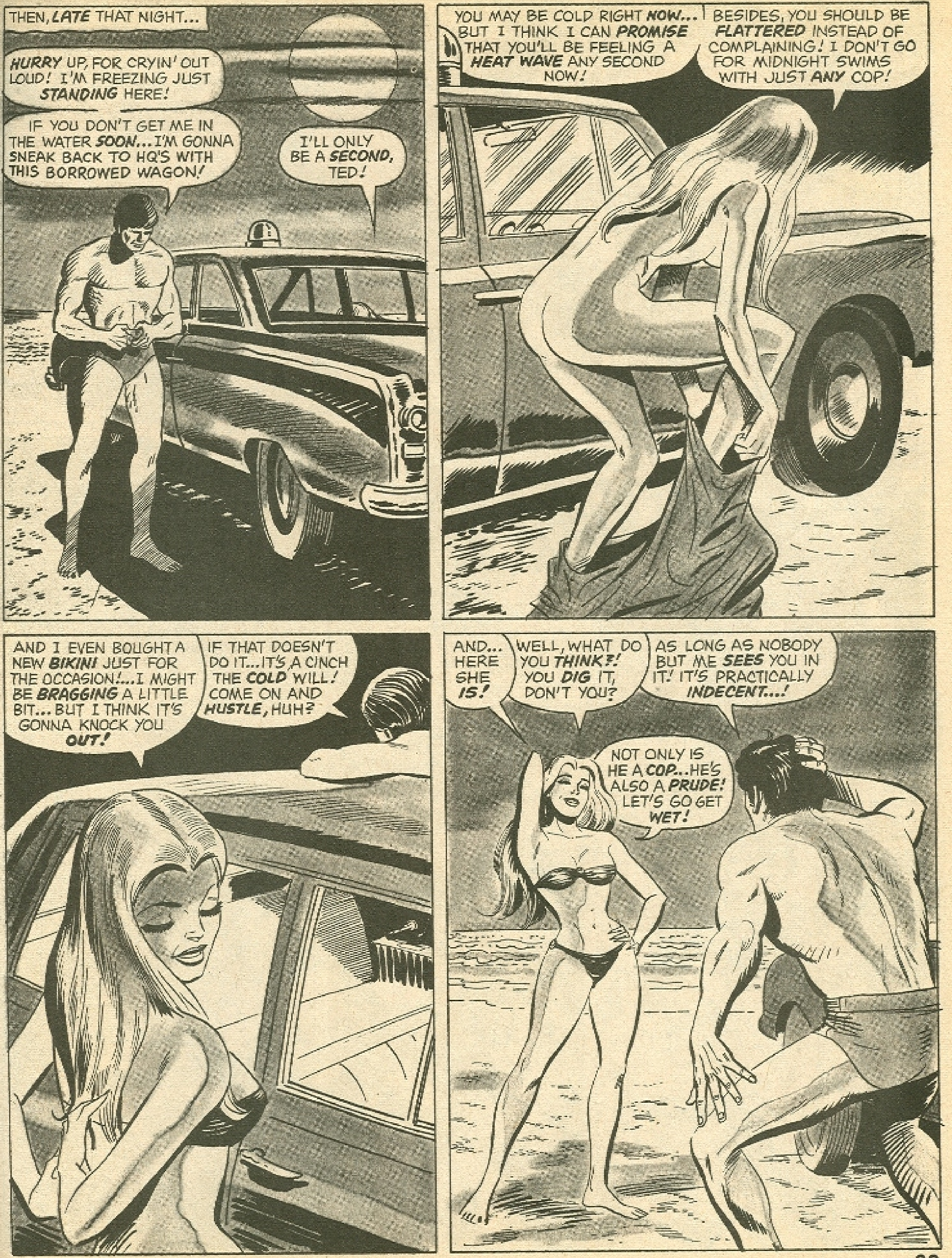

THEY'RE TRYIN' TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT! HIT THE BRAKES AND WHEEL AROUND!
IF THEY HEAD FOR THE HILLS... WE GOT THE MACHINERY TO RUN 'EM INTO THE GROUND!
THAT'S A FACT...
...IF THEIR CRATES DON'T FALL APART BEFORE WE CATCH 'EM!
EITHER I'M SEEIN' THINGS... OR THE LEOPARDS ARE GOIN' SOFT IN THE HEAD!
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE LININ' UP TO MEET US HEAD ON!
YOU'D THINK THEY'D HAVE LEARNED... AFTER ALL THE TIMES WE MURDERED THEM BEFORE!
YOUR EYES GET BETTER EVERY DAY, CURLY!
BUT SINCE THEY AIN'T... THIS TIME DON'T PULL ANY PUNCHES!
RUN THOSE HOGS AND WASTE 'EM!
THEY'RE COMIN' AT US! THIS TIME WE'LL MAKE UP FOR THOSE PAST RUMBLES!
THIS TIME...
THE WILD BUNCH'LL DIE!

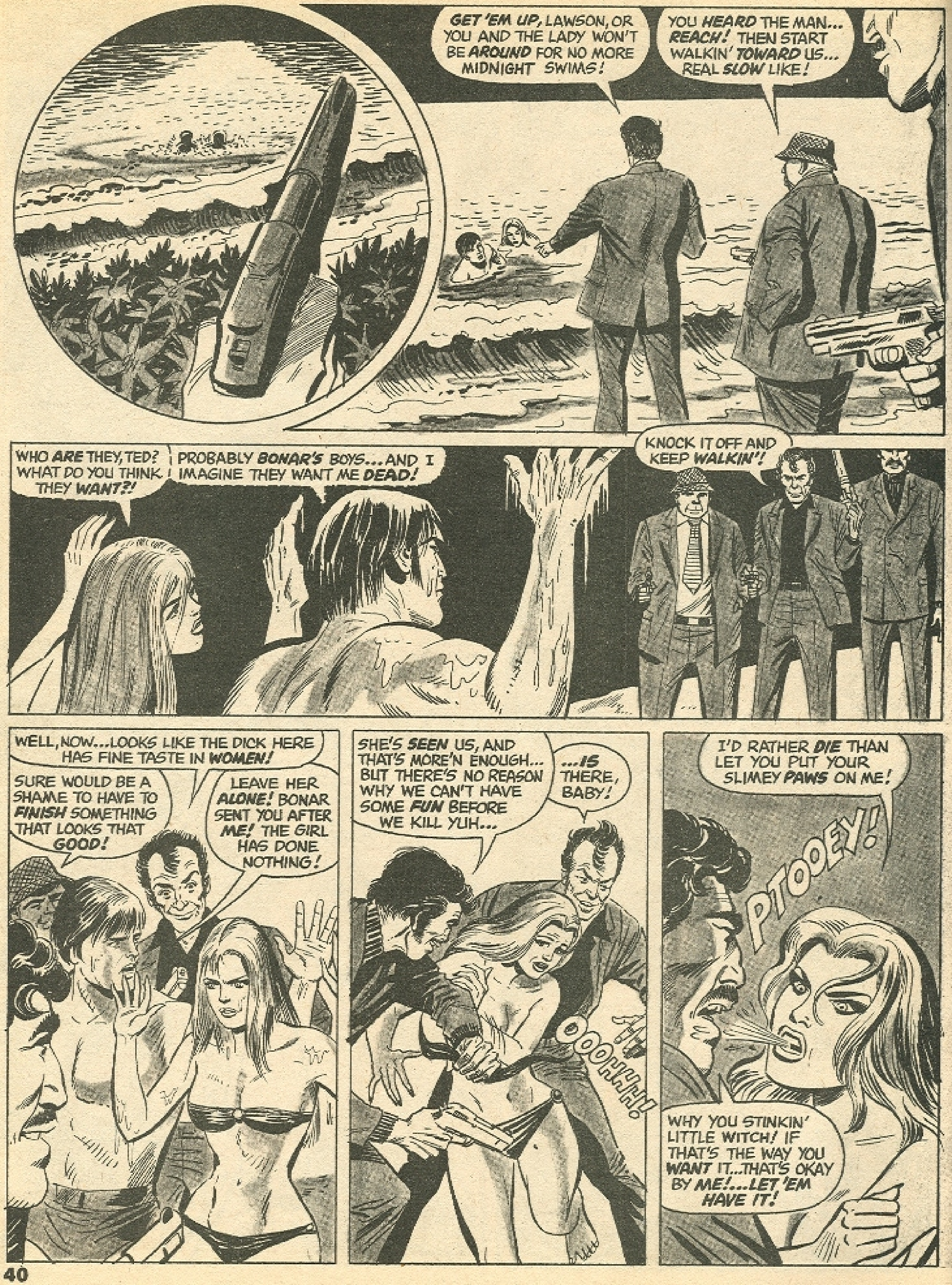

BACK FOR MORE HUH, SNAKE? I'LL SAY ONE THING FOR YUH... YOU SURE DIG PUNISHMENT!
UUNNHHH!
TWO TO ONE, HUH?!
OOOFFF!
YOU DUDES DEFINITELY DON'T BELONG TO THE AMA!
WHEN OLD CURLY COMES FLYIN'...SOME LEOPARDS GONNA BE DYIN'!
HEY, THE BUNCH MUST BE IN ROUGH SHAPE! THEY'RE RECRUITIN' DAMES THESE DAYS!
DAMN STRAIGHT, JACK! HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD OF WOMEN'S LIB?!
I SEEN THAT, HONEY...BUT A BROAD LIKE YOU OUGHTTA BE DOIN' NICER THINGS... LIKE GETTIN' TO KNOW ME BETTER!
WHOK!
AAGGHHH
OOOHHH!

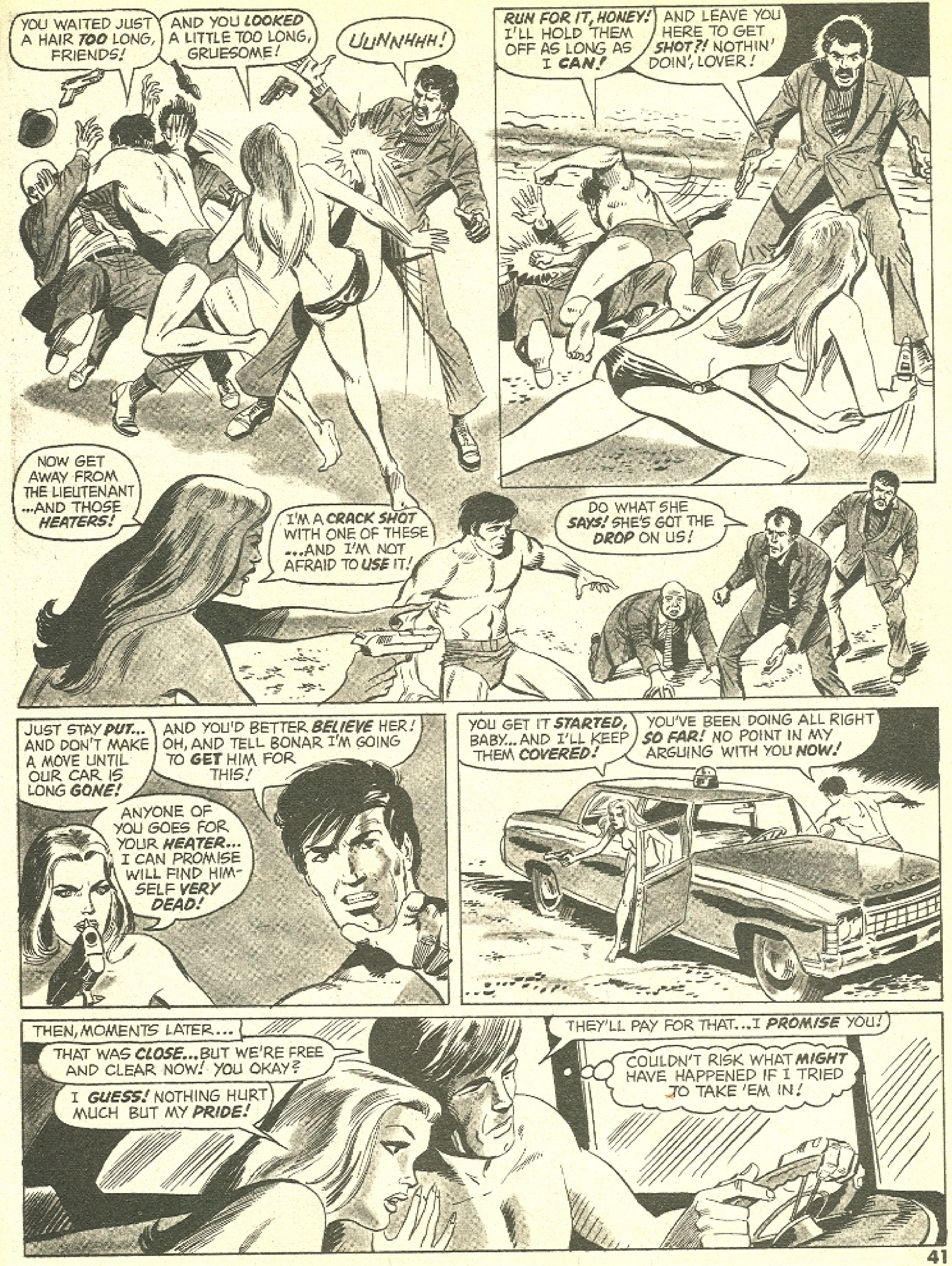

KEEP TALKIN', BABY! OLD SLIMEY CAN DIG A CHICK WHO HAS SOMETHING TO SAY!
OOOHH!
FLAKE OFF, YOU ROTTEN SLOB! I MAY LOOK LIKE SOME TWO-BIT DAME YOU'D PICK UP IN A BEER JOINT... BUT IF YOU STICK AROUND FOR LONG, YOU'RE LIABLE TO FIND OUT THAT LOOKS CAN FOOL YOU!
YEEEOWWW!
MY FACE!
NOTHING TO GET UPTIGHT ABOUT, ROMEO! IT WASN'T MUCH TO STARE AT ANYWAY!... HOPE YOUR STOMACH'S IN BETTER SHAPE!
AND SINCE YOU WEREN'T MUCH IN THE BRAINS DEPARTMENT...I DON'T IMAGINE THE UNDERTAKER WILL CARE IF YOURS ARE SLIGHTLY DAMAGED!
WHACK!
I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS!
BETTER SPLIT FOR NOW, AND EVEN UP WITH THE WILD BUNCH LATER!
COME ON, YOU CLOWNS! WE'RE CUTTIN' OUT!
HEY, THE HEAD MAN'S GETTIN' AWAY! HOLD TIGHT AND I'LL BRING HIM IN!
NO DICE, DEKE, BABY! LET HIM SPLIT FOR NOW! THE MAIN MAN WASN'T HERE...SO MAYBE SNAKE WILL LEAD US TO HIM!

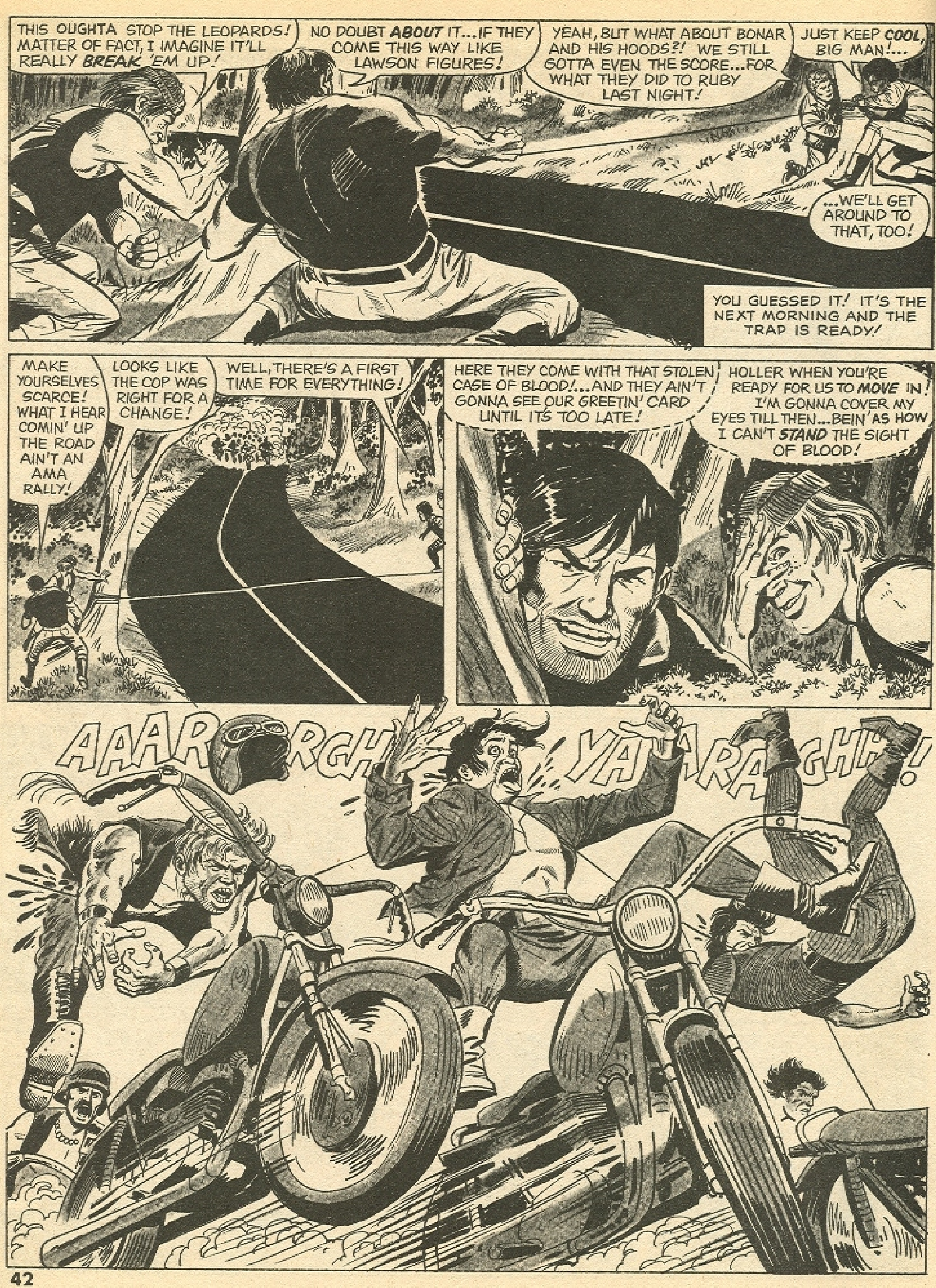

HOWEVER, TEN MINUTES LATER...
IT'S NO USE, MAN! WE'VE BLOWN THIS ONE!
YEAH, HE GOT TOO BIG A JUMP ON US! NO WAY TO CATCH HIM IN THIS TRAFFIC!
THEN WE'D BETTER REPORT BACK TO TEN... AND ON THE DOUBLE!
BAR
POLICE
LOOKS LIKE MA'S GOT COMPANY!
YEAH, AND I'LL GIVE YOU THREE GUESSES WHO IT IS!
LAWSON MUST'VE HEARD ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT THE AIRPORT... AND HEADED STRAIGHT FOR HERE!
WHAT'S HAPPENING, GANG... OTHER THAN YOUR BUSTING A FEW SKULLS AT SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL!
NOT AS MUCH AS WE WISH WAS HAPPENING, LAWSON!
SNAKE LARSEN GAVE US THE SLIP... AND THE MAN YOU'RE AFTER NEVER SHOWED!
I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT, BUT MAYBE IT'S FOR THE BEST!
SIT DOWN AND LET ME TELL YOU HOW I HAVE THIS THING FIGURED!
OKAY, COPPER... BUT MAKE IT SNAPPY! WE DON'T WANNA RUIN OUR REP BY BEIN' SEEN WITH YUH!
I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT I THINK ROCKY BONAR IS BEHIND THIS CAPER! THERE'S NOTHING A GANG LIKE THE LEOPARDS COULD DO WITH A BLOOD SHIPMENT...
BUT I NEED PROOF WHICH I DON'T HAVE AT THE MOMENT!
THAT'S WHERE YOU CLOWNS COME IN! I THINK THEY'LL MAKE ANOTHER HIT AT THE AIRPORT...
...AND THIS TIME WE'LL LET 'EM GET AWAY WITH IT... FOR A WHILE!
BUT WHEN THEY TRY TO DELIVER IT TO BONAR... YOU'LL BE WAITING FOR THEM!

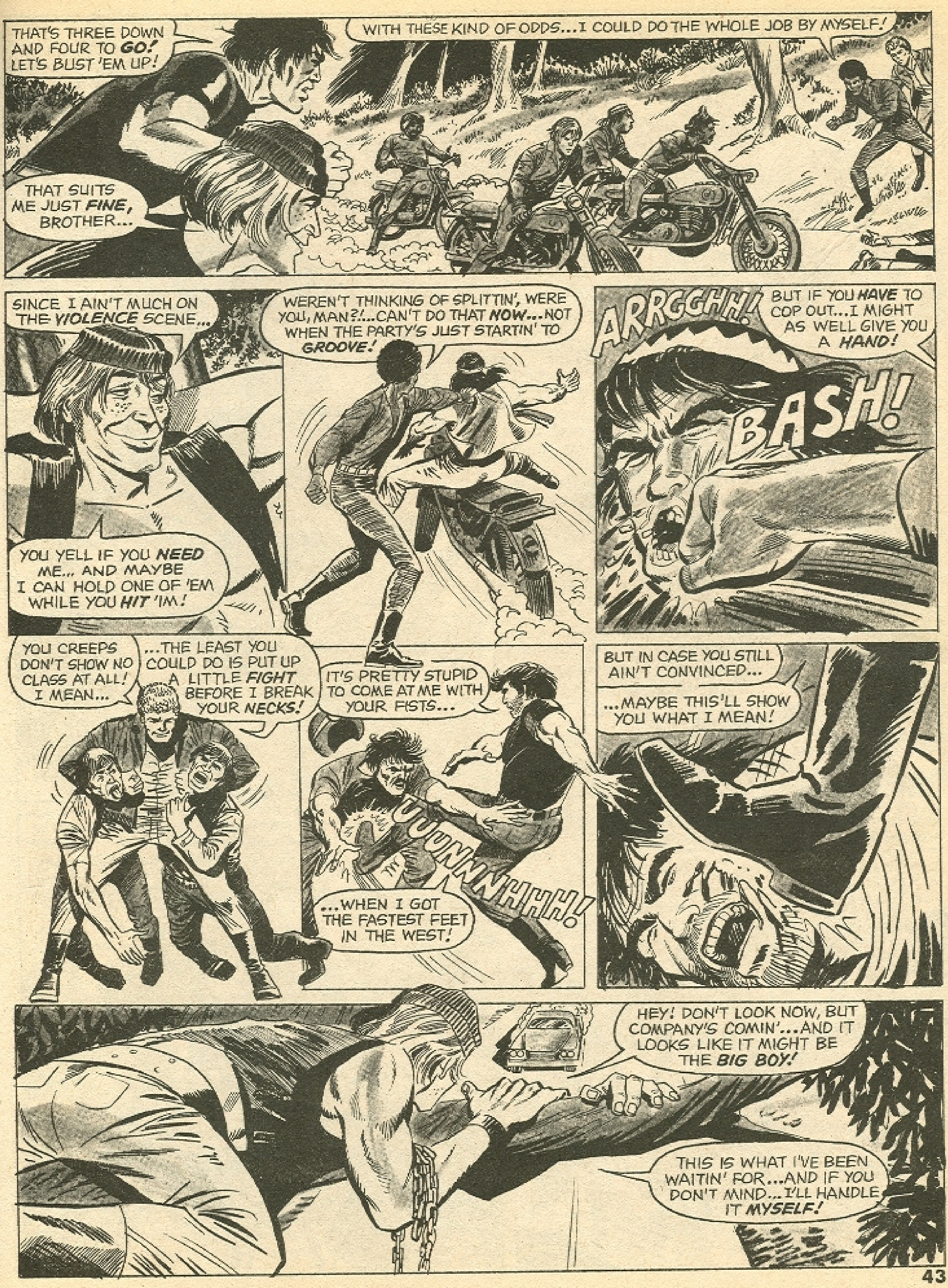

THE NEXT SHIPMENT IS TOMORROW MORNING AT TEN O'CLOCK!
YOU'LL STATION YOURSELVES ON THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO BONAR'S MANSION...
AND WHEN THE LEOPARDS RIDE BY WITH THE BLOOD...
WE JUMP 'EM!
THAT'S ABOUT THE SIZE OF IT...ONLY BE CAREFUL NOT TO DAMAGE THE BLOOD!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, MAN! BY THE TIME WE'RE FINISHED...WE'LL PROBABLY HAVE SOME EXTRA BLOOD TO GO WITH IT!
OH, AND ONE LAST THING! KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN AND BE CAREFUL! I KNOW THE LEOPARDS DON'T CARRY HARDWARE ...BUT BONAR AND HIS MEN DO!
SO COOL IT! I'VE GOT AN INTEREST IN WHAT HAPPENS TO ONE OF YOU!
THIS COULD BE A ROUGH ONE, HONEY! WHY DON'T YOU STAY OUT OF IT... FOR ME!
YOU KNOW BETTER THAN THAT, TED! OUR AGREEMENT WAS...WE SEE EACH OTHER...AS LONG AS YOU DON'T CROWD ME!
YOU'RE STARTING TO DO JUST THAT!
SORRY, BABY! I'LL TRY TO WATCH IT... BUT IT ISN'T EASY WHEN THE GIRL YOU'RE NUTS ABOUT RIDES WITH THE WILD BUNCH!
YOU'LL LEARN TO LIVE WITH IT, MISTER! I'LL HELP YOU... JUST LIKE...THIS!
WHY THAT DIRTY COP! I'LL TEACH HIM TO LAY HIS STINKIN' PAWS ON RUBY!
HOLD IT, SLINK! SHE'S A BIG GIRL... AND SHE CAN KISS ANYBODY SHE LIKES!
BESIDES, WE OWE LAWSON...FOR GETTING US OFF THAT BUM BURGLARY RAP LAST MONTH...AND NOW WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO PAY HIM BACK!

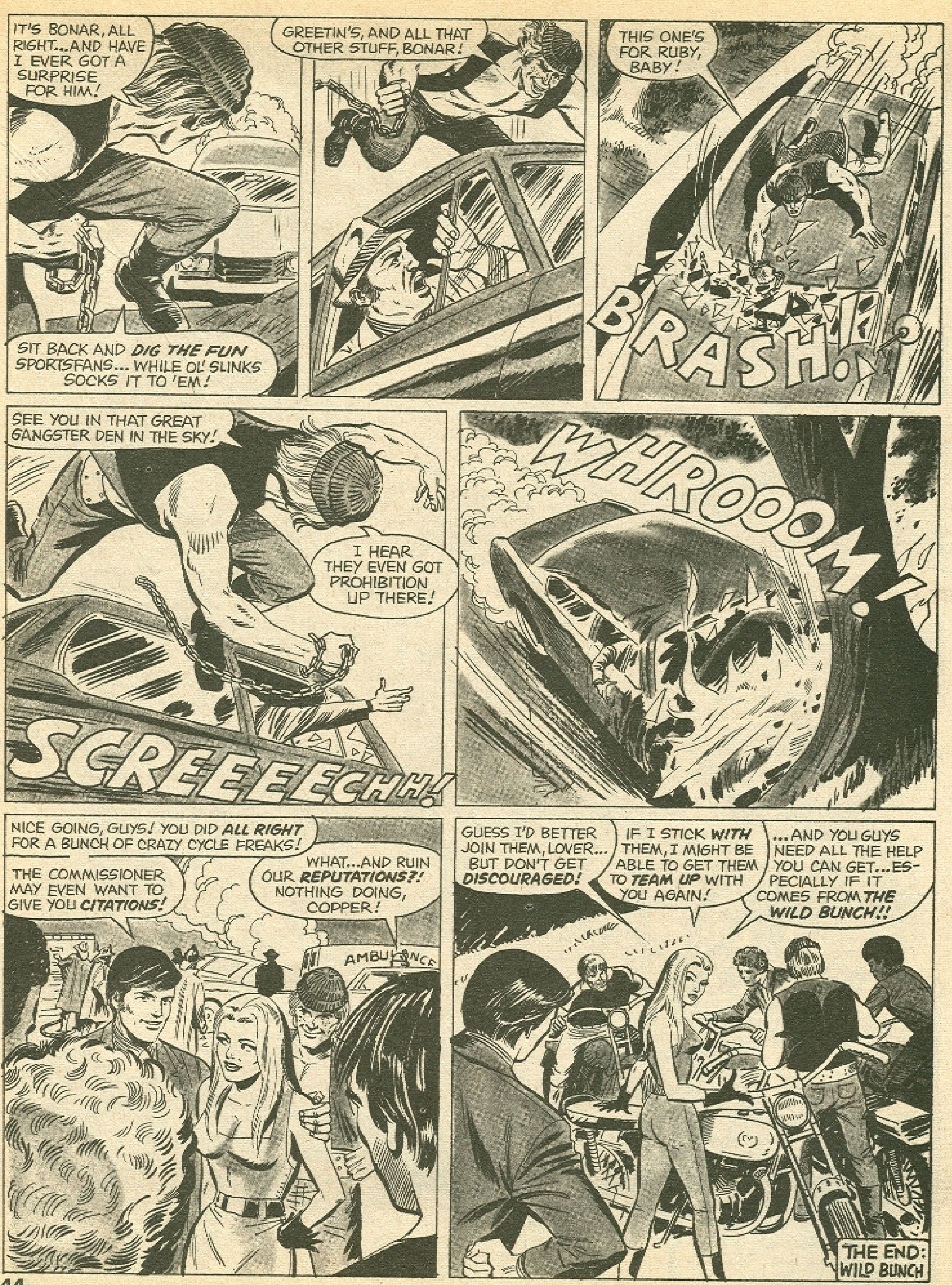

THEN, LATE THAT NIGHT...
HURRY UP, FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD! I'M FREEZING JUST STANDING HERE!
IF YOU DON'T GET ME IN THE WATER SOON... I'M GONNA SNEAK BACK TO HQ'S WITH THIS BORROWED WAGON!
I'LL ONLY BE A SECOND, TED!
YOU MAY BE COLD RIGHT NOW... BUT I THINK I CAN PROMISE THAT YOU'LL BE FEELING A HEAT WAVE ANY SECOND NOW!
BESIDES, YOU SHOULD BE FLATTERED INSTEAD OF COMPLAINING! I DON'T GO FOR MIDNIGHT SWIMS WITH JUST ANY COP!
AND I EVEN BOUGHT A NEW BIKINI JUST FOR THE OCCASION!... I MIGHT BE BRAGGING A LITTLE BIT... BUT I THINK IT'S GONNA KNOCK YOU OUT!
IF THAT DOESN'T DO IT... IT'S A CINCH THE COLD WILL! COME ON AND HUSTLE, HUH?
AND... HERE SHE IS!
WELL, WHAT DO YOU THINK?! YOU DIG IT, DON'T YOU?
AS LONG AS NOBODY BUT ME SEES YOU IN IT! IT'S PRACTICALLY INDECENT...!
NOT ONLY IS HE A COP... HE'S ALSO A PRUDE! LET'S GO GET WET!


GET 'EM UP, LAWSON, OR YOU AND THE LADY WON'T BE AROUND FOR NO MORE MIDNIGHT SWIMS!
YOU HEARD THE MAN... REACH! THEN START WALKIN' TOWARD US... REAL SLOW LIKE!
WHO ARE THEY, TED? WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY WANT?!
PROBABLY BONAR'S BOYS... AND I IMAGINE THEY WANT ME DEAD!
KNOCK IT OFF AND KEEP WALKIN'!
WELL, NOW... LOOKS LIKE THE DICK HERE HAS FINE TASTE IN WOMEN!
SURE WOULD BE A SHAME TO HAVE TO FINISH SOMETHING THAT LOOKS THAT GOOD!
LEAVE HER ALONE! BONAR SENT YOU AFTER ME! THE GIRL HAS DONE NOTHING!
SHE'S SEEN US, AND THAT'S MORE'N ENOUGH... BUT THERE'S NO REASON WHY WE CAN'T HAVE SOME FUN BEFORE WE KILL YUH...
...IS THERE, BABY!
OOOHHH!
I'D RATHER DIE THAN LET YOU PUT YOUR SLIMEY PAWS ON ME!
PTOOEY!
WHY YOU STINKIN' LITTLE WITCH! IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT... THAT'S OKAY BY ME!... LET 'EM HAVE IT!

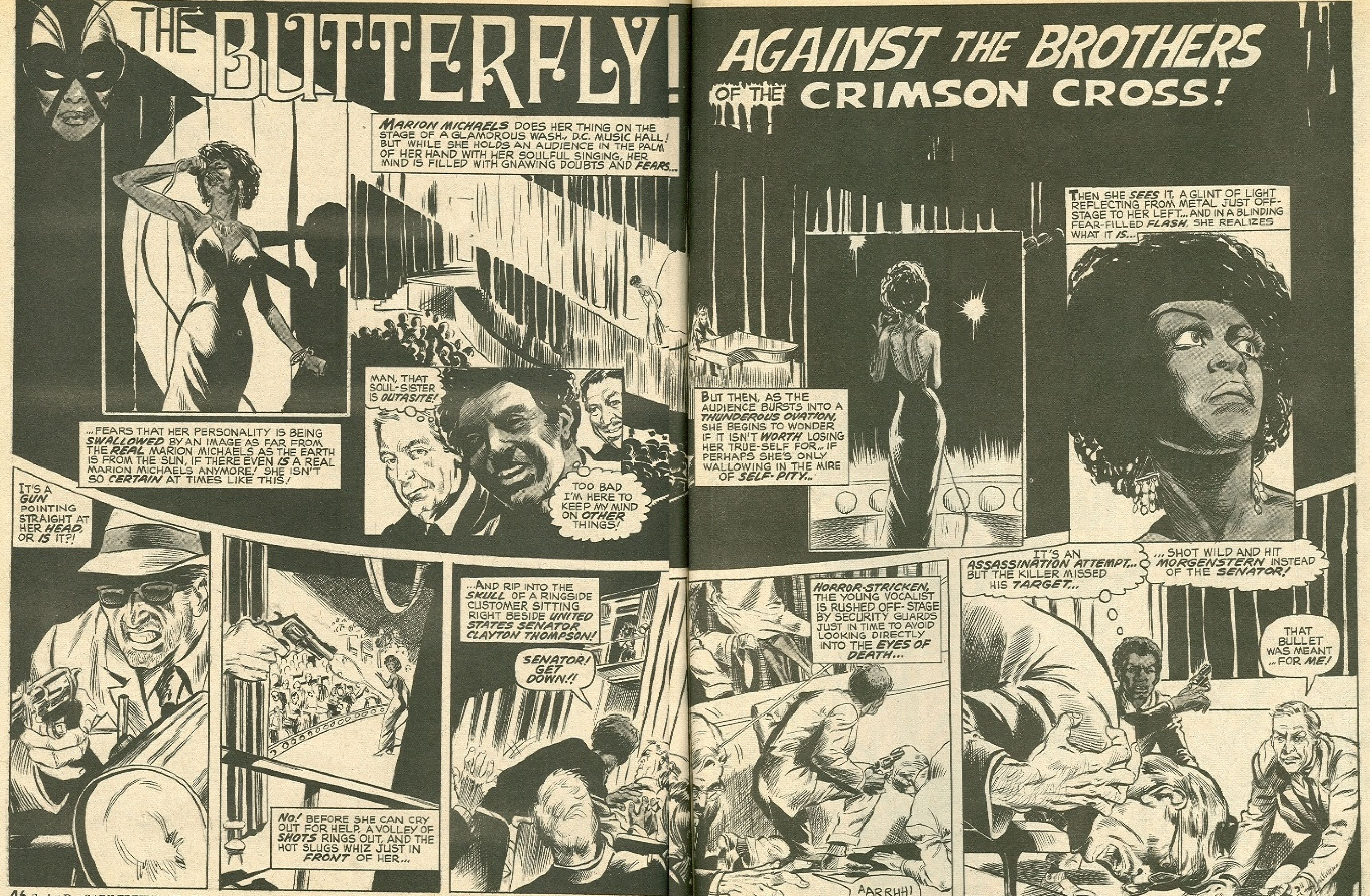

YOU WAITED JUST A HAIR *TOO* LONG, FRIENDS!
AND YOU *LOOKED* A LITTLE TOO LONG, GRUESOME!
UUNNHHH!
RUN FOR IT, HONEY! I'LL HOLD THEM OFF AS LONG AS I *CAN!*
AND LEAVE YOU HERE TO GET *SHOT?!* NOTHIN' DOIN', LOVER!
NOW GET AWAY FROM THE LIEUTENANT ...AND THOSE *HEATERS!*
I'M A *CRACK SHOT* WITH ONE OF THESE ...AND I'M NOT AFRAID TO *USE* IT!
DO WHAT SHE *SAYS!* SHE'S GOT THE *DROP* ON US!
JUST STAY *PUT*... AND DON'T MAKE A MOVE UNTIL OUR CAR IS LONG *GONE!*
AND YOU'D BETTER *BELIEVE* HER! OH, AND TELL BONAR I'M GOING TO *GET* HIM FOR THIS!
ANYONE OF YOU GOES FOR YOUR *HEATER*... I CAN PROMISE WILL FIND HIMSELF *VERY DEAD!*
YOU GET IT *STARTED*, BABY... AND I'LL KEEP THEM *COVERED!*
YOU'VE BEEN DOING ALL RIGHT *SO FAR!* NO POINT IN MY ARGUING WITH YOU *NOW!*
THEN, MOMENTS LATER...
THAT WAS *CLOSE*... BUT WE'RE FREE AND CLEAR NOW! YOU OKAY?
I *GUESS!* NOTHING HURT MUCH BUT MY *PRIDE!*
THEY'LL PAY FOR THAT... I *PROMISE* YOU!
COULDN'T RISK WHAT *MIGHT* HAVE HAPPENED IF I TRIED TO TAKE 'EM IN!


THIS OUGHTA STOP THE LEOPARDS! MATTER OF FACT, I IMAGINE IT'LL REALLY BREAK 'EM UP!
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT... IF THEY COME THIS WAY LIKE LAWSON FIGURES!
YEAH, BUT WHAT ABOUT BONAR AND HIS HOODS?! WE STILL GOTTA EVEN THE SCORE... FOR WHAT THEY DID TO RUBY LAST NIGHT!
JUST KEEP COOL, BIG MAN!...
...WE'LL GET AROUND TO THAT, TOO!
YOU GUESSED IT! IT'S THE NEXT MORNING AND THE TRAP IS READY!
MAKE YOURSELVES SCARCE! WHAT I HEAR COMIN' UP THE ROAD AIN'T AN AMA RALLY!
LOOKS LIKE THE COP WAS RIGHT FOR A CHANGE!
WELL, THERE'S A FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING!
HERE THEY COME WITH THAT STOLEN CASE OF BLOOD!... AND THEY AIN'T GONNA SEE OUR GREETIN' CARD UNTIL ITS TOO LATE!
HOLLER WHEN YOU'RE READY FOR US TO MOVE IN! I'M GONNA COVER MY EYES TILL THEN... BEIN' AS HOW I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF BLOOD!
AAARRGH!
YAAARAGHH!

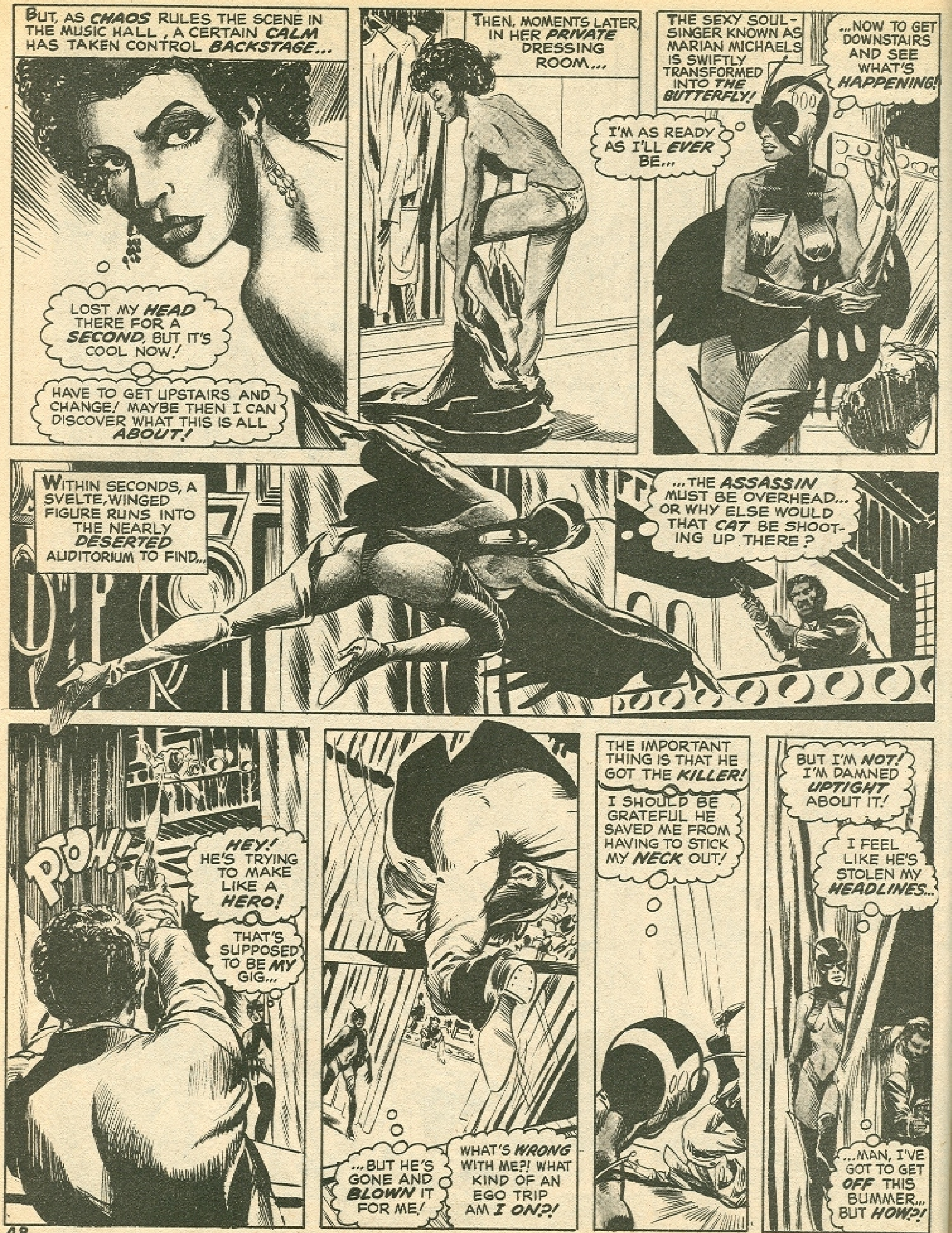

THAT'S THREE DOWN AND FOUR TO GO! LET'S BUST 'EM UP!
WITH THESE KIND OF ODDS... I COULD DO THE WHOLE JOB BY MYSELF!
THAT SUITS ME JUST FINE, BROTHER...
SINCE I AIN'T MUCH ON THE VIOLENCE SCENE...
YOU YELL IF YOU NEED ME... AND MAYBE I CAN HOLD ONE OF 'EM WHILE YOU HIT 'IM!
WEREN'T THINKING OF SPLITTIN', WERE YOU, MAN?!...CAN'T DO THAT NOW... NOT WHEN THE PARTY'S JUST STARTIN' TO GROOVE!
ARRGGHH!
BUT IF YOU HAVE TO COP OUT...I MIGHT AS WELL GIVE YOU A HAND!
BASH!
YOU CREEPS DON'T SHOW NO CLASS AT ALL! I MEAN...
...THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS PUT UP A LITTLE FIGHT BEFORE I BREAK YOUR NECKS!
IT'S PRETTY STUPID TO COME AT ME WITH YOUR FISTS...
UUNNNHHHH!
...WHEN I GOT THE FASTEST FEET IN THE WEST!
BUT IN CASE YOU STILL AIN'T CONVINCED...
...MAYBE THIS'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I MEAN!
HEY! DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT COMPANY'S COMIN'...AND IT LOOKS LIKE IT MIGHT BE THE BIG BOY!
THIS IS WHAT I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR...AND IF YOU DON'T MIND...I'LL HANDLE IT MYSELF!

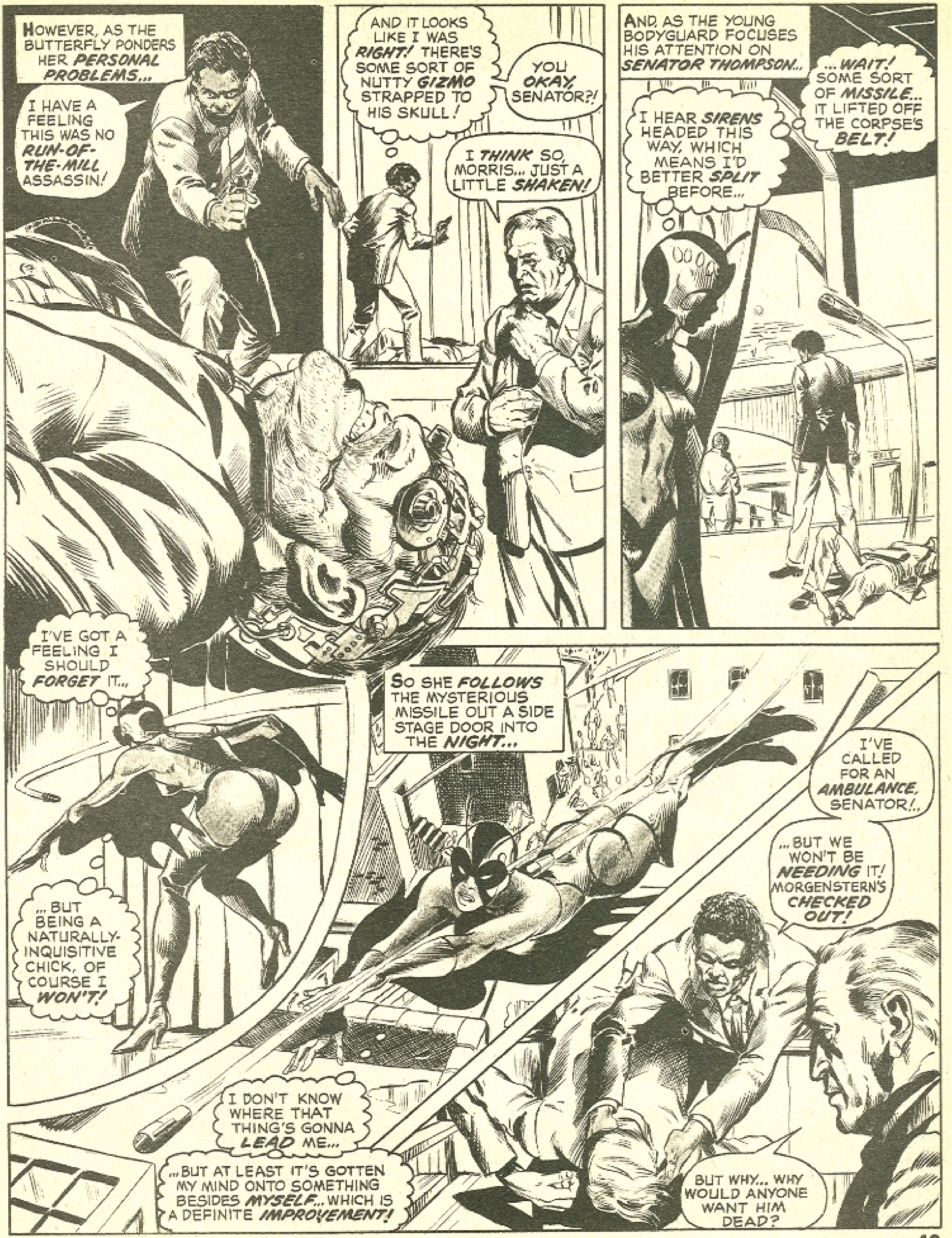

IT'S BONAR, ALL RIGHT...AND HAVE I EVER GOT A SURPRISE FOR HIM!
SIT BACK AND DIG THE FUN SPORTSFANS... WHILE OL' SLINKS SOCKS IT TO 'EM!
GREETIN'S, AND ALL THAT OTHER STUFF, BONAR!
THIS ONE'S FOR RUBY, BABY!
BRASH!!!
SEE YOU IN THAT GREAT GANGSTER DEN IN THE SKY!
I HEAR THEY EVEN GOT PROHIBITION UP THERE!
SCREEEECHH!
WHROOOM!
NICE GOING, GUYS! YOU DID ALL RIGHT FOR A BUNCH OF CRAZY CYCLE FREAKS!
THE COMMISSIONER MAY EVEN WANT TO GIVE YOU CITATIONS!
WHAT...AND RUIN OUR REPUTATIONS?! NOTHING DOING, COPPER!
AMBULANCE
GUESS I'D BETTER JOIN THEM, LOVER... BUT DON'T GET DISCOURAGED!
IF I STICK WITH THEM, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET THEM TO TEAM UP WITH YOU AGAIN!
...AND YOU GUYS NEED ALL THE HELP YOU CAN GET...ESPECIALLY IF IT COMES FROM THE WILD BUNCH!!
THE END: WILD BUNCH

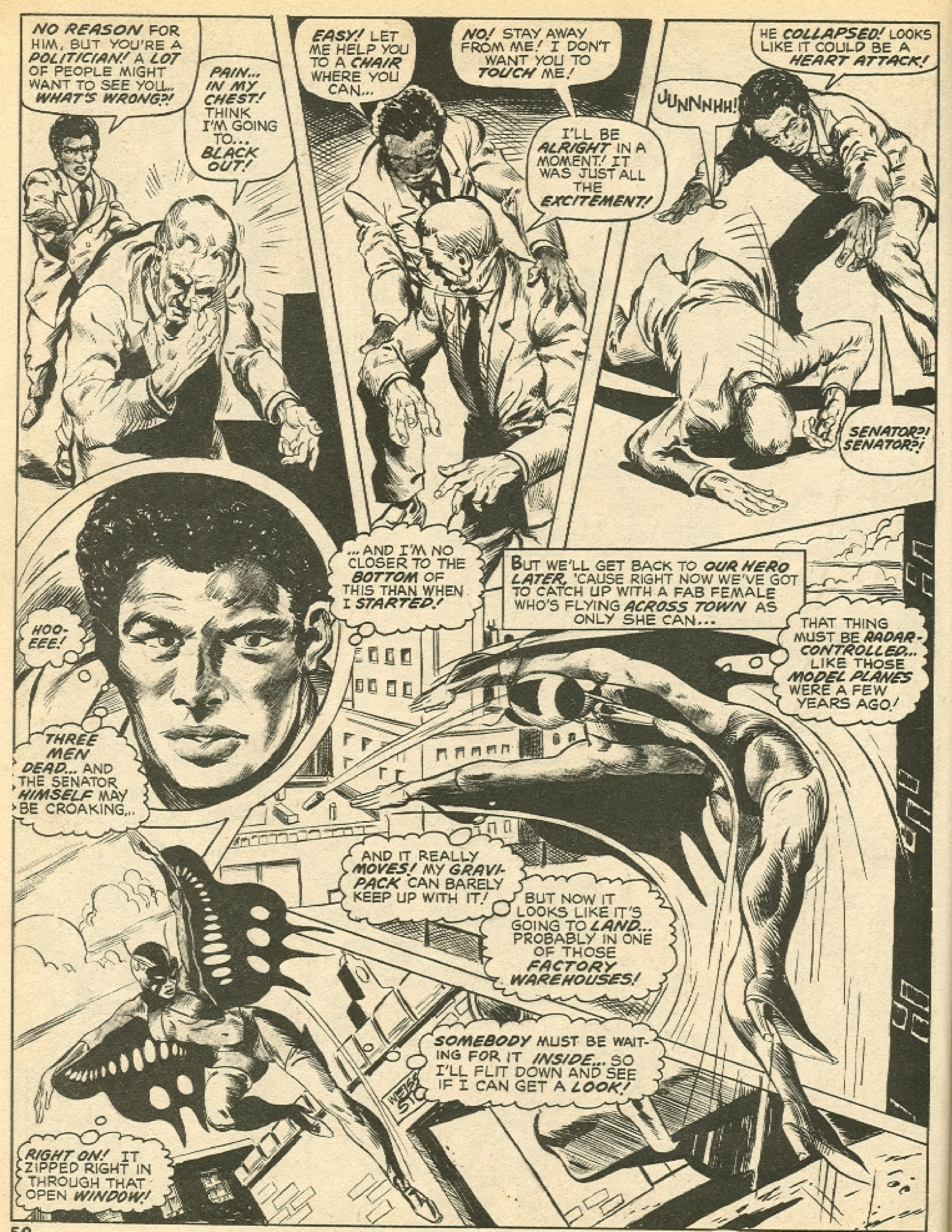
THE BUTTERFLY! AGAINST THE BROTHERS OF THE CRIMSON CROSS!

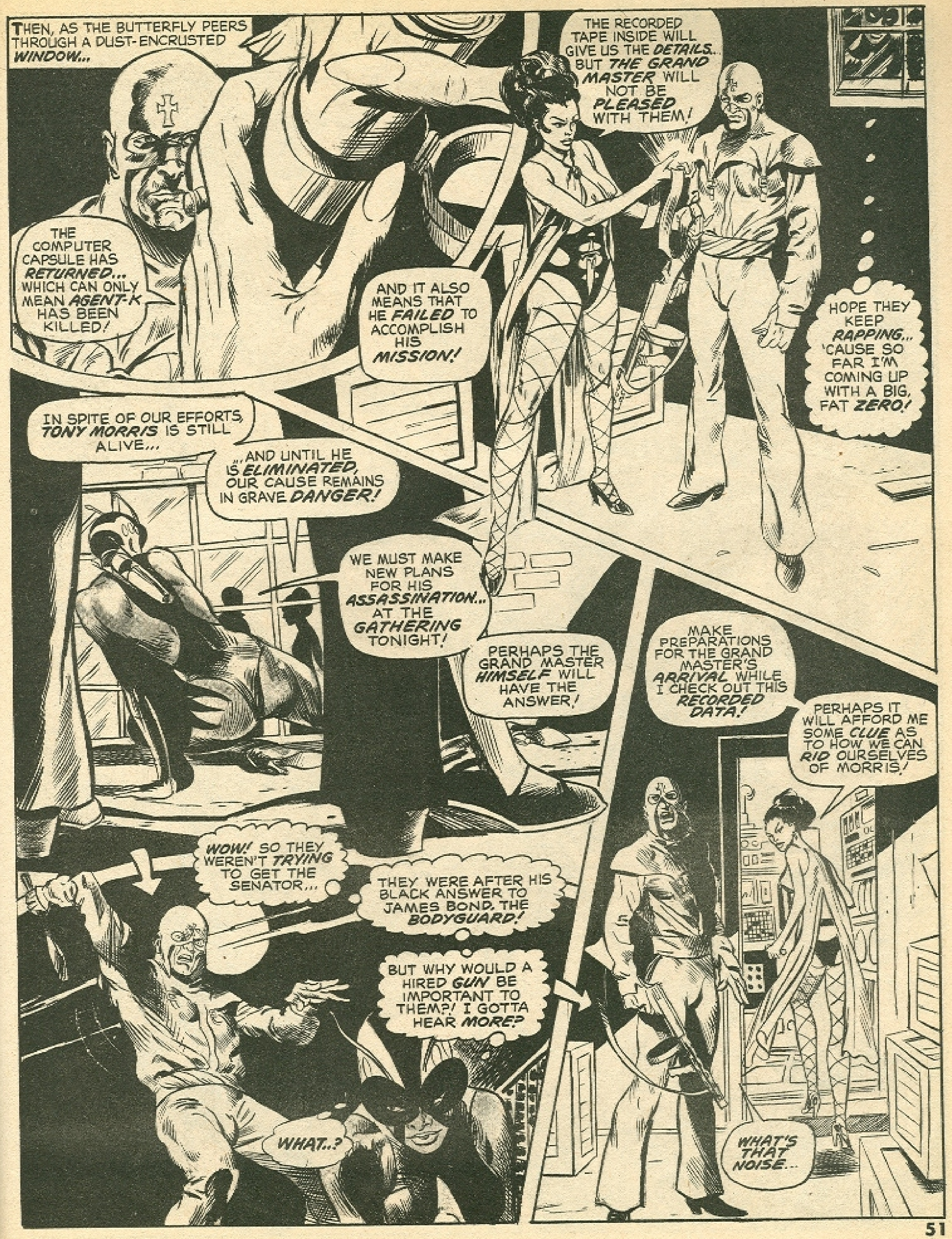

MARION MICHAELS DOES HER THING ON THE STAGE OF A GLAMOROUS WASH., D.C. MUSIC HALL! BUT WHILE SHE HOLDS AN AUDIENCE IN THE PALM OF HER HAND WITH HER SOULFUL SINGING, HER MIND IS FILLED WITH GNAWING DOUBTS AND FEARS...
...FEARS THAT HER PERSONALITY IS BEING SWALLOWED BY AN IMAGE AS FAR FROM THE REAL MARION MICHAELS AS THE EARTH IS FROM THE SUN, IF THERE EVEN IS A REAL MARION MICHAELS ANYMORE! SHE ISN'T SO CERTAIN AT TIMES LIKE THIS!
MAN, THAT SOUL-SISTER IS OUTASITE!
TOO BAD I'M HERE TO KEEP MY MIND ON OTHER THINGS!
BUT THEN, AS THE AUDIENCE BURSTS INTO A THUNDEROUS OVATION, SHE BEGINS TO WONDER IF IT ISN'T WORTH LOSING HER TRUE-SELF FOR... IF PERHAPS SHE'S ONLY WALLOWING IN THE MIRE OF SELF-PITY...
THEN SHE SEES IT, A GLINT OF LIGHT REFLECTING FROM METAL JUST OFF-STAGE TO HER LEFT... AND IN A BLINDING FEAR-FILLED FLASH, SHE REALIZES WHAT IT IS...
IT'S A GUN POINTING STRAIGHT AT HER HEAD, OR IS IT?!
NO! BEFORE SHE CAN CRY OUT FOR HELP, A VOLLEY OF SHOTS RINGS OUT, AND THE HOT SLUGS WHIZ JUST IN FRONT OF HER...
...AND RIP INTO THE SKULL OF A RINGSIDE CUSTOMER SITTING RIGHT BESIDE UNITED STATES SENATOR CLAYTON THOMPSON!
SENATOR! GET DOWN!!
HORROR-STRICKEN, THE YOUNG VOCALIST IS RUSHED OFF-STAGE BY SECURITY GUARDS JUST IN TIME TO AVOID LOOKING DIRECTLY INTO THE EYES OF DEATH...
AARRHH!
IT'S AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT... BUT THE KILLER MISSED HIS TARGET...
...SHOT WILD AND HIT MORGENSTERN INSTEAD OF THE SENATOR!
THAT BULLET WAS MEANT ...FOR ME!

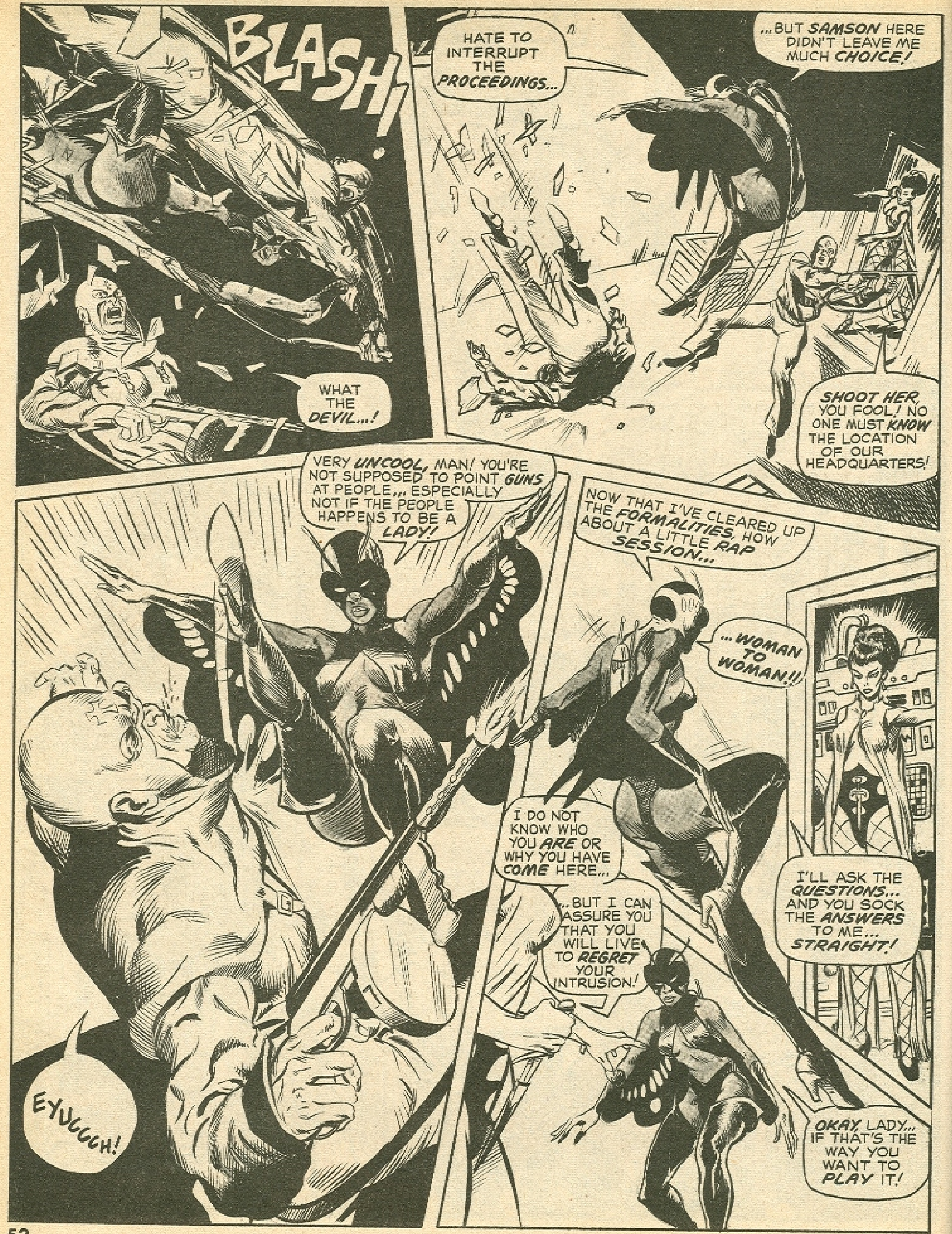
Script By: GARY FREIDRICH • Plot and Art By: RICH BUCKLER

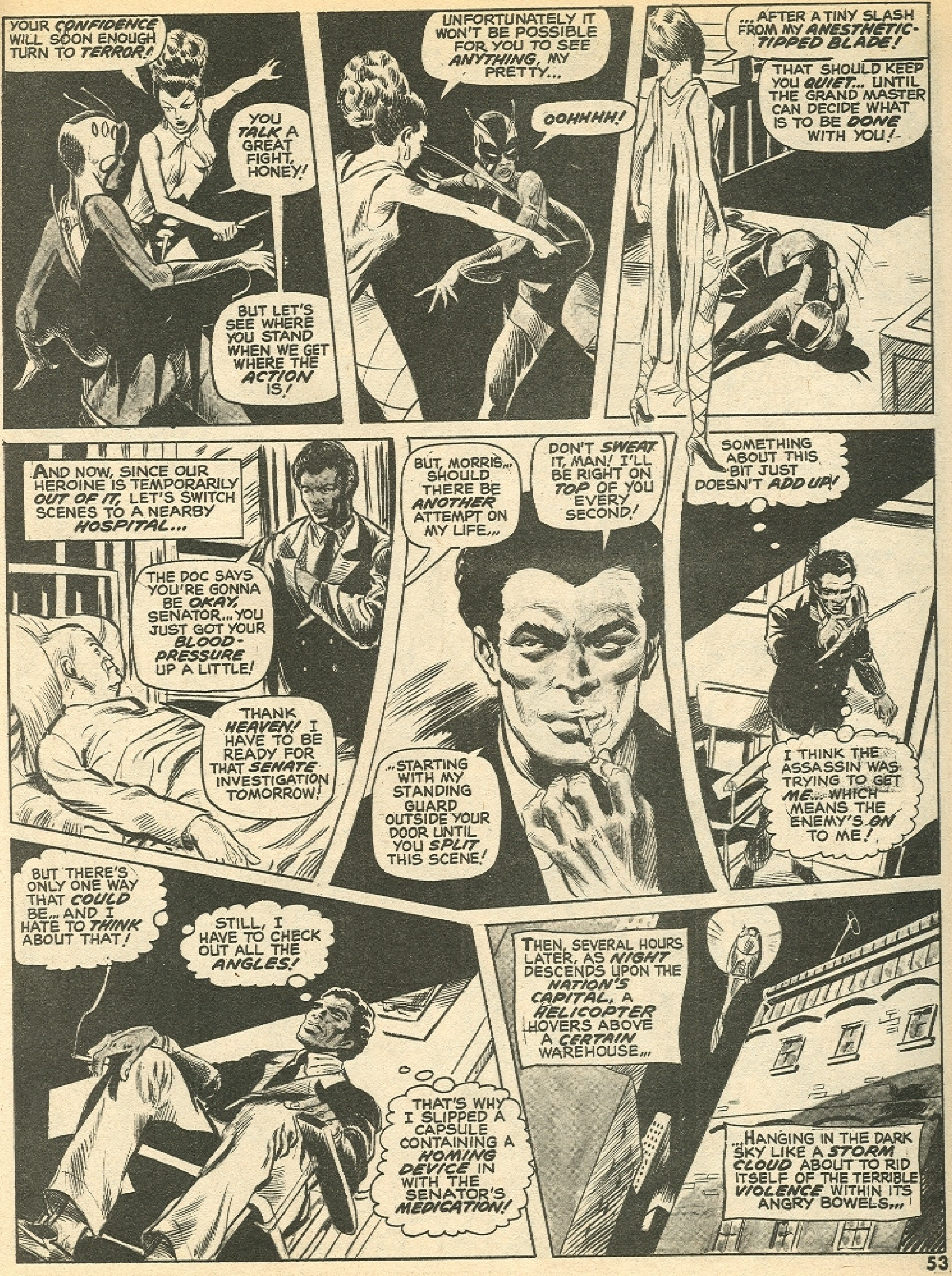

BUT, AS CHAOS RULES THE SCENE IN THE MUSIC HALL, A CERTAIN CALM HAS TAKEN CONTROL BACKSTAGE...
LOST MY HEAD THERE FOR A SECOND, BUT IT'S COOL NOW!
HAVE TO GET UPSTAIRS AND CHANGE! MAYBE THEN I CAN DISCOVER WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!
THEN, MOMENTS LATER, IN HER PRIVATE DRESSING ROOM...
THE SEXY SOUL-SINGER KNOWN AS MARIAN MICHAELS IS SWIFTLY TRANSFORMED INTO THE BUTTERFLY!
...NOW TO GET DOWNSTAIRS AND SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING!
I'M AS READY AS I'LL EVER BE...
WITHIN SECONDS, A SVELTE, WINGED FIGURE RUNS INTO THE NEARLY DESERTED AUDITORIUM TO FIND...
...THE ASSASSIN MUST BE OVERHEAD... OR WHY ELSE WOULD THAT CAT BE SHOOTING UP THERE?
POW!
HEY! HE'S TRYING TO MAKE LIKE A HERO!
THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE MY GIG...
...BUT HE'S GONE AND BLOWN IT FOR ME!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?! WHAT KIND OF AN EGO TRIP AM I ON?!
THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT HE GOT THE KILLER!
I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL HE SAVED ME FROM HAVING TO STICK MY NECK OUT!
BUT I'M NOT! I'M DAMNED UPTIGHT ABOUT IT!
I FEEL LIKE HE'S STOLEN MY HEADLINES...
...MAN, I'VE GOT TO GET OFF THIS BUMMER... BUT HOW?!

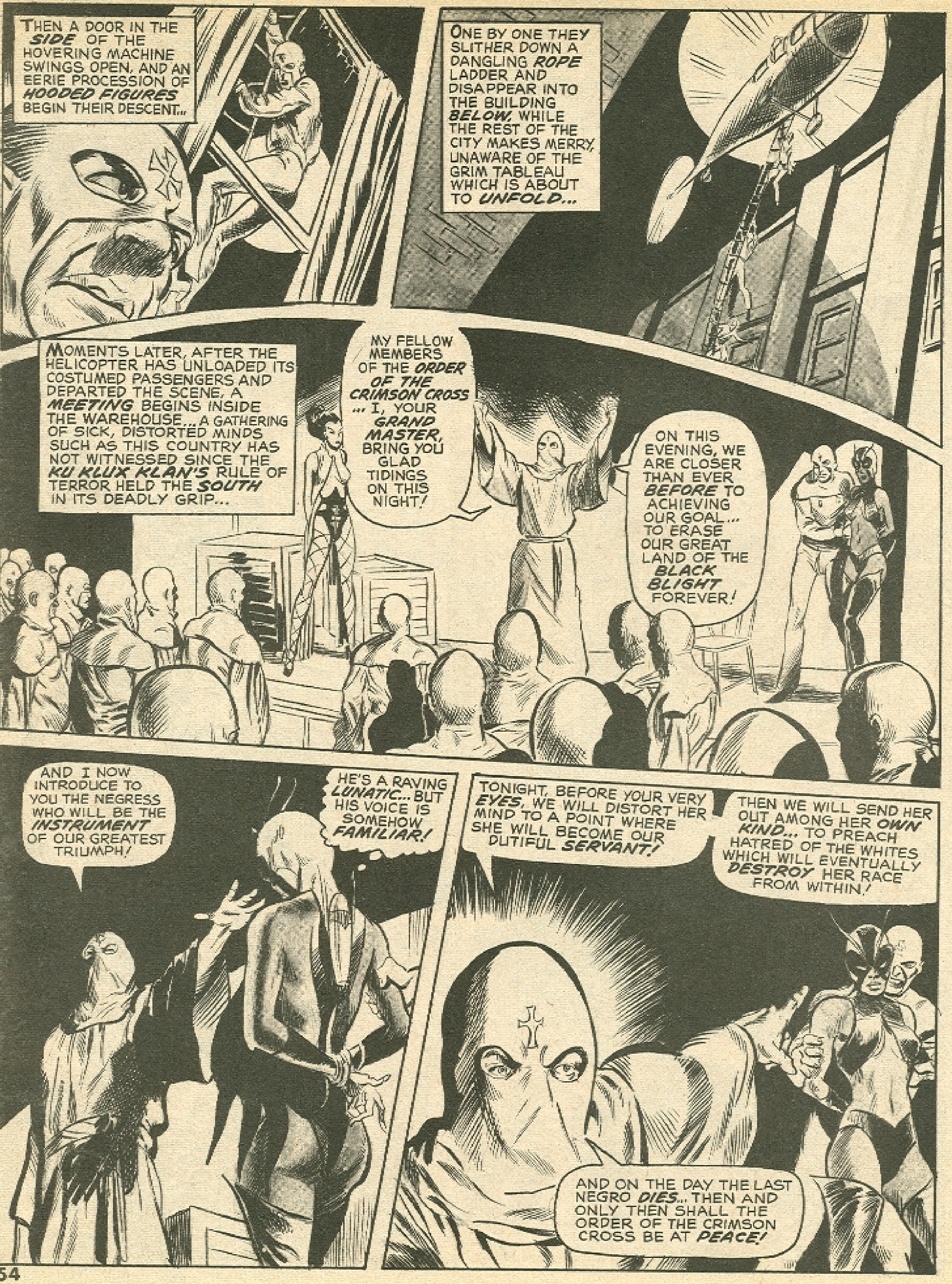

HOWEVER, AS THE BUTTERFLY PONDERS HER *PERSONAL PROBLEMS*...
I HAVE A FEELING THIS WAS NO *RUN-OF-THE-MILL* ASSASSIN!
AND IT LOOKS LIKE I WAS *RIGHT!* THERE'S SOME SORT OF NUTTY *GIZMO* STRAPPED TO HIS SKULL!
YOU *OKAY*, SENATOR?!
I *THINK* SO, MORRIS... JUST A LITTLE *SHAKEN!*
AND, AS THE YOUNG BODYGUARD FOCUSES HIS ATTENTION ON *SENATOR THOMPSON*...
...*WAIT!* SOME SORT OF *MISSILE*... IT LIFTED OFF THE CORPSE'S *BELT!*
I HEAR *SIRENS* HEADED THIS WAY, WHICH MEANS I'D BETTER *SPLIT* BEFORE...
I'VE GOT A FEELING I SHOULD *FORGET* IT...
...BUT BEING A NATURALLY-INQUISITIVE CHICK, OF COURSE I *WON'T!*
SO SHE *FOLLOWS* THE MYSTERIOUS MISSILE OUT A SIDE STAGE DOOR INTO THE *NIGHT*...
I DON'T KNOW WHERE THAT THING'S GONNA *LEAD* ME...
...BUT AT LEAST IT'S GOTTEN MY MIND ONTO SOMETHING BESIDES *MYSELF*... WHICH IS A DEFINITE *IMPROVEMENT!*
I'VE CALLED FOR AN *AMBULANCE*, SENATOR!...
...BUT WE WON'T BE *NEEDING* IT! MORGENSTERN'S *CHECKED OUT!*
BUT WHY... WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT HIM DEAD?

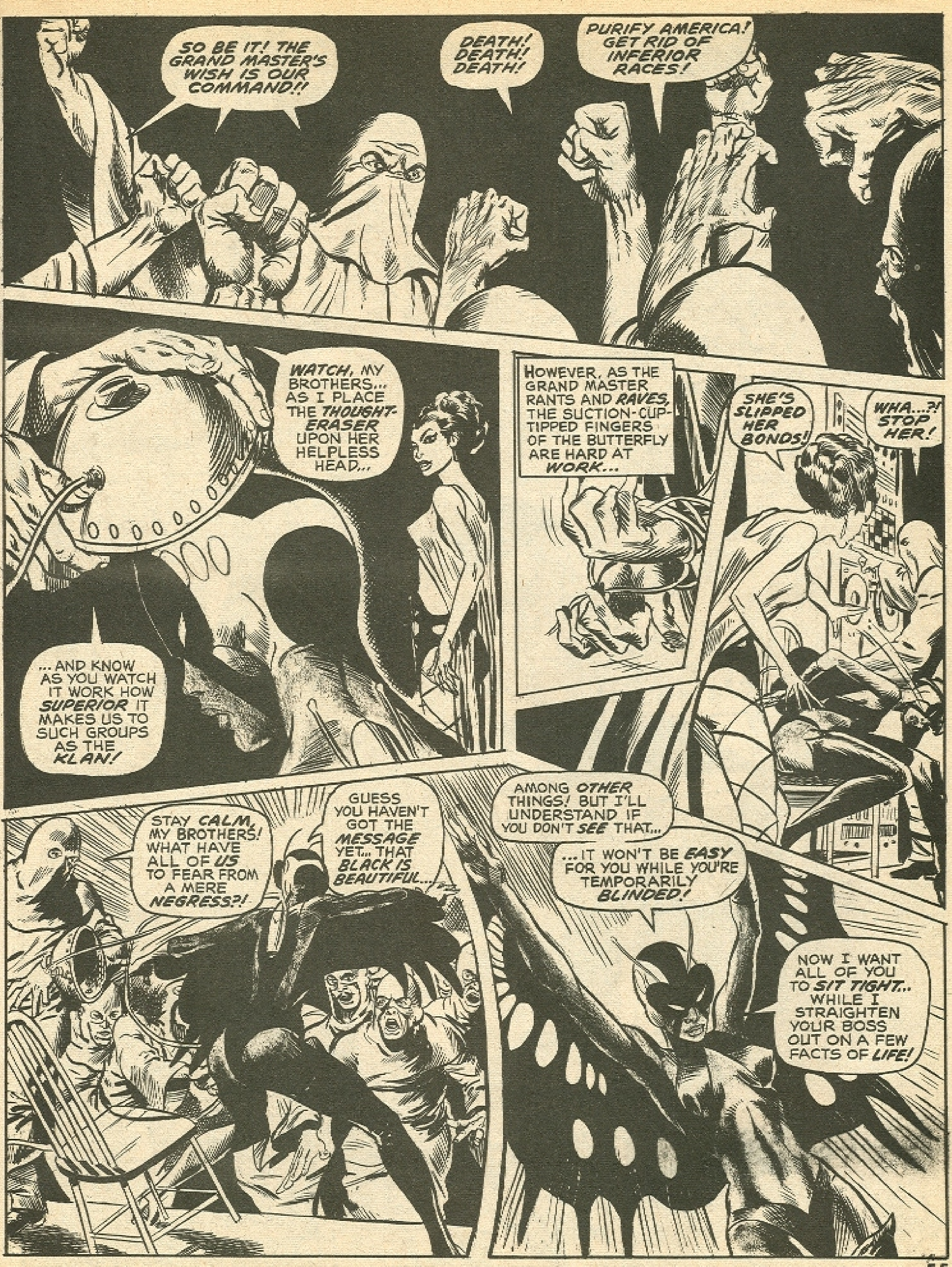

NO REASON FOR HIM, BUT YOU'RE A POLITICIAN! A LOT OF PEOPLE MIGHT WANT TO SEE YOU... WHAT'S WRONG?!
PAIN... IN MY CHEST! THINK I'M GOING TO... BLACK OUT!
EASY! LET ME HELP YOU TO A CHAIR WHERE YOU CAN...
NO! STAY AWAY FROM ME! I DON'T WANT YOU TO TOUCH ME!
I'LL BE ALRIGHT IN A MOMENT! IT WAS JUST ALL THE EXCITEMENT!
HE COLLAPSED! LOOKS LIKE IT COULD BE A HEART ATTACK!
UUNNNHH!
SENATOR?! SENATOR?!
HOO-EEE!
...AND I'M NO CLOSER TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS THAN WHEN I STARTED!
THREE MEN DEAD... AND THE SENATOR HIMSELF MAY BE CROAKING...
BUT WE'LL GET BACK TO OUR HERO LATER, 'CAUSE RIGHT NOW WE'VE GOT TO CATCH UP WITH A FAB FEMALE WHO'S FLYING ACROSS TOWN AS ONLY SHE CAN...
THAT THING MUST BE RADAR-CONTROLLED... LIKE THOSE MODEL PLANES WERE A FEW YEARS AGO!
AND IT REALLY MOVES! MY GRAVI-PACK CAN BARELY KEEP UP WITH IT!
BUT NOW IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO LAND... PROBABLY IN ONE OF THOSE FACTORY WAREHOUSES!
SOMEBODY MUST BE WAITING FOR IT INSIDE... SO I'LL FLIT DOWN AND SEE IF I CAN GET A LOOK!
RIGHT ON! IT ZIPPED RIGHT IN THROUGH THAT OPEN WINDOW!

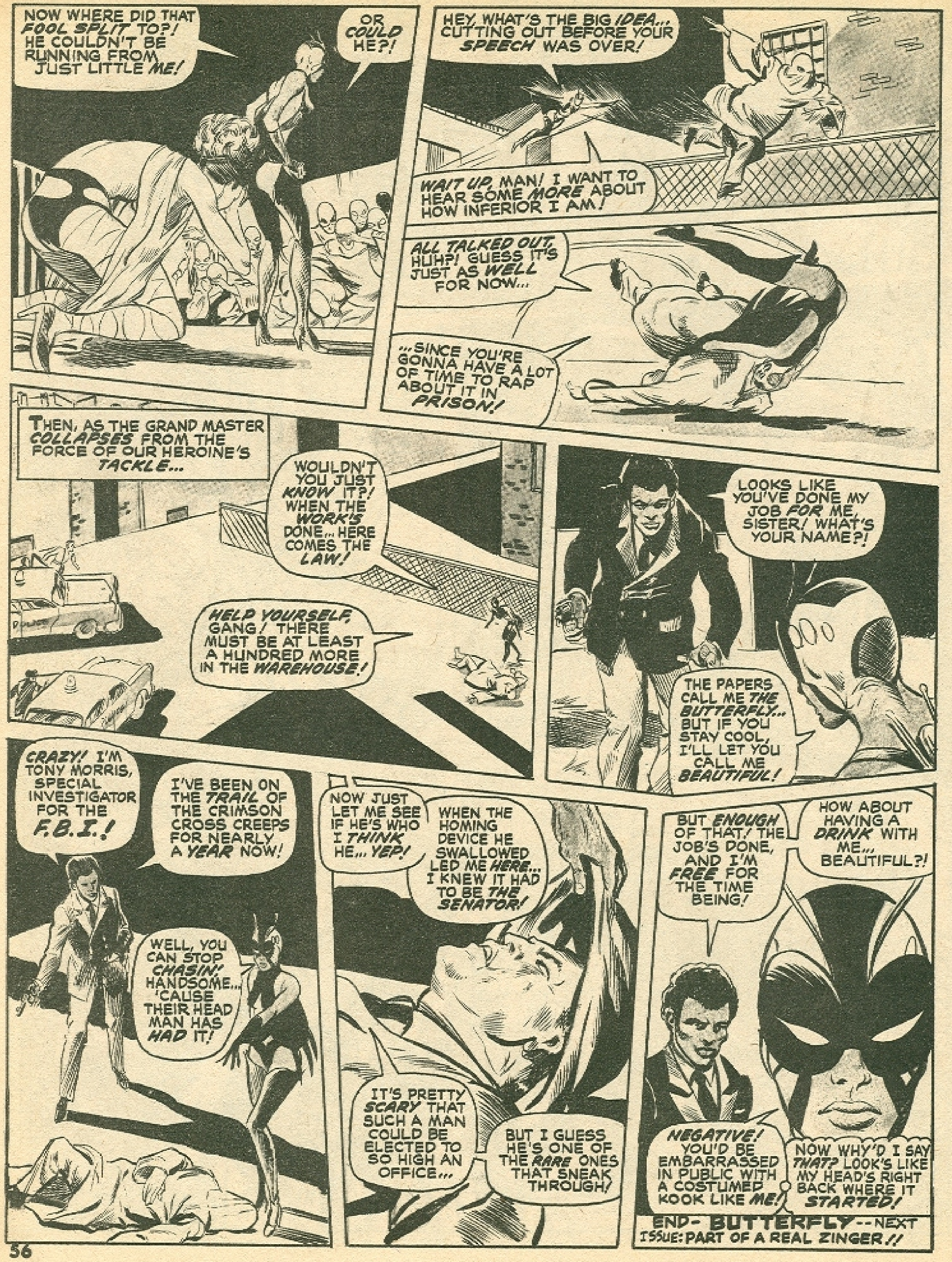

THEN, AS THE BUTTERFLY PEERS THROUGH A DUST-ENCRUSTED *WINDOW*...
THE RECORDED TAPE INSIDE WILL GIVE US THE *DETAILS*... BUT *THE GRAND MASTER* WILL NOT BE *PLEASED* WITH THEM!
THE COMPUTER CAPSULE HAS *RETURNED*... WHICH CAN ONLY MEAN *AGENT-K* HAS BEEN KILLED!
AND IT ALSO MEANS THAT HE *FAILED* TO ACCOMPLISH HIS *MISSION!*
HOPE THEY KEEP *RAPPING*... 'CAUSE SO FAR I'M COMING UP WITH A BIG, FAT *ZERO!*
IN SPITE OF OUR EFFORTS, *TONY MORRIS* IS STILL ALIVE...
...AND UNTIL HE IS *ELIMINATED*, OUR CAUSE REMAINS IN GRAVE *DANGER!*
WE MUST MAKE NEW PLANS FOR HIS *ASSASSINATION*... AT THE *GATHERING* TONIGHT!
PERHAPS THE GRAND MASTER *HIMSELF* WILL HAVE THE ANSWER!
MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR THE GRAND MASTER'S *ARRIVAL* WHILE I CHECK OUT THIS *RECORDED DATA!*
PERHAPS IT WILL AFFORD ME SOME *CLUE* AS TO HOW WE CAN *RID* OURSELVES OF MORRIS!
WOW! SO THEY WEREN'T *TRYING* TO GET THE SENATOR...
THEY WERE AFTER HIS BLACK ANSWER TO JAMES BOND, THE *BODYGUARD!*
BUT WHY WOULD A HIRED *GUN* BE IMPORTANT TO THEM?! I GOTTA HEAR *MORE?*
WHAT..?
WHAT'S THAT NOISE...


BLASH!
WHAT THE DEVIL...!
HATE TO INTERRUPT THE PROCEEDINGS...
...BUT SAMSON HERE DIDN'T LEAVE ME MUCH CHOICE!
SHOOT HER, YOU FOOL! NO ONE MUST KNOW THE LOCATION OF OUR HEADQUARTERS!
VERY UNCOOL, MAN! YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO POINT GUNS AT PEOPLE... ESPECIALLY NOT IF THE PEOPLE HAPPENS TO BE A LADY!
EYUGGCH!
NOW THAT I'VE CLEARED UP THE FORMALITIES, HOW ABOUT A LITTLE RAP SESSION...
...WOMAN TO WOMAN!!!
I DO NOT KNOW WHO YOU ARE OR WHY YOU HAVE COME HERE...
...BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOU WILL LIVE TO REGRET YOUR INTRUSION!
I'LL ASK THE QUESTIONS... AND YOU SOCK THE ANSWERS TO ME... STRAIGHT!
OKAY, LADY... IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT TO PLAY IT!


YOUR CONFIDENCE WILL SOON ENOUGH TURN TO TERROR!
YOU TALK A GREAT FIGHT, HONEY!
BUT LET'S SEE WHERE YOU STAND WHEN WE GET WHERE THE ACTION IS!
UNFORTUNATELY IT WON'T BE POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO SEE ANYTHING, MY PRETTY...
OOHHHH!
...AFTER A TINY SLASH FROM MY ANESTHETIC-TIPPED BLADE!
THAT SHOULD KEEP YOU QUIET... UNTIL THE GRAND MASTER CAN DECIDE WHAT IS TO BE DONE WITH YOU!
AND NOW, SINCE OUR HEROINE IS TEMPORARILY OUT OF IT, LET'S SWITCH SCENES TO A NEARBY HOSPITAL...
THE DOC SAYS YOU'RE GONNA BE OKAY, SENATOR... YOU JUST GOT YOUR BLOOD-PRESSURE UP A LITTLE!
THANK HEAVEN! I HAVE TO BE READY FOR THAT SENATE INVESTIGATION TOMORROW!
BUT, MORRIS... SHOULD THERE BE ANOTHER ATTEMPT ON MY LIFE...
DON'T SWEAT IT, MAN! I'LL BE RIGHT ON TOP OF YOU EVERY SECOND!
...STARTING WITH MY STANDING GUARD OUTSIDE YOUR DOOR UNTIL YOU SPLIT THIS SCENE!
SOMETHING ABOUT THIS BIT JUST DOESN'T ADD UP!
I THINK THE ASSASSIN WAS TRYING TO GET ME... WHICH MEANS THE ENEMY'S ON TO ME!
BUT THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY THAT COULD BE... AND I HATE TO THINK ABOUT THAT!
STILL, I HAVE TO CHECK OUT ALL THE ANGLES!
THAT'S WHY I SLIPPED A CAPSULE CONTAINING A HOMING DEVICE IN WITH THE SENATOR'S MEDICATION!
THEN, SEVERAL HOURS LATER, AS NIGHT DESCENDS UPON THE NATION'S CAPITAL, A HELICOPTER HOVERS ABOVE A CERTAIN WAREHOUSE...
...HANGING IN THE DARK SKY LIKE A STORM CLOUD ABOUT TO RID ITSELF OF THE TERRIBLE VIOLENCE WITHIN ITS ANGRY BOWELS...

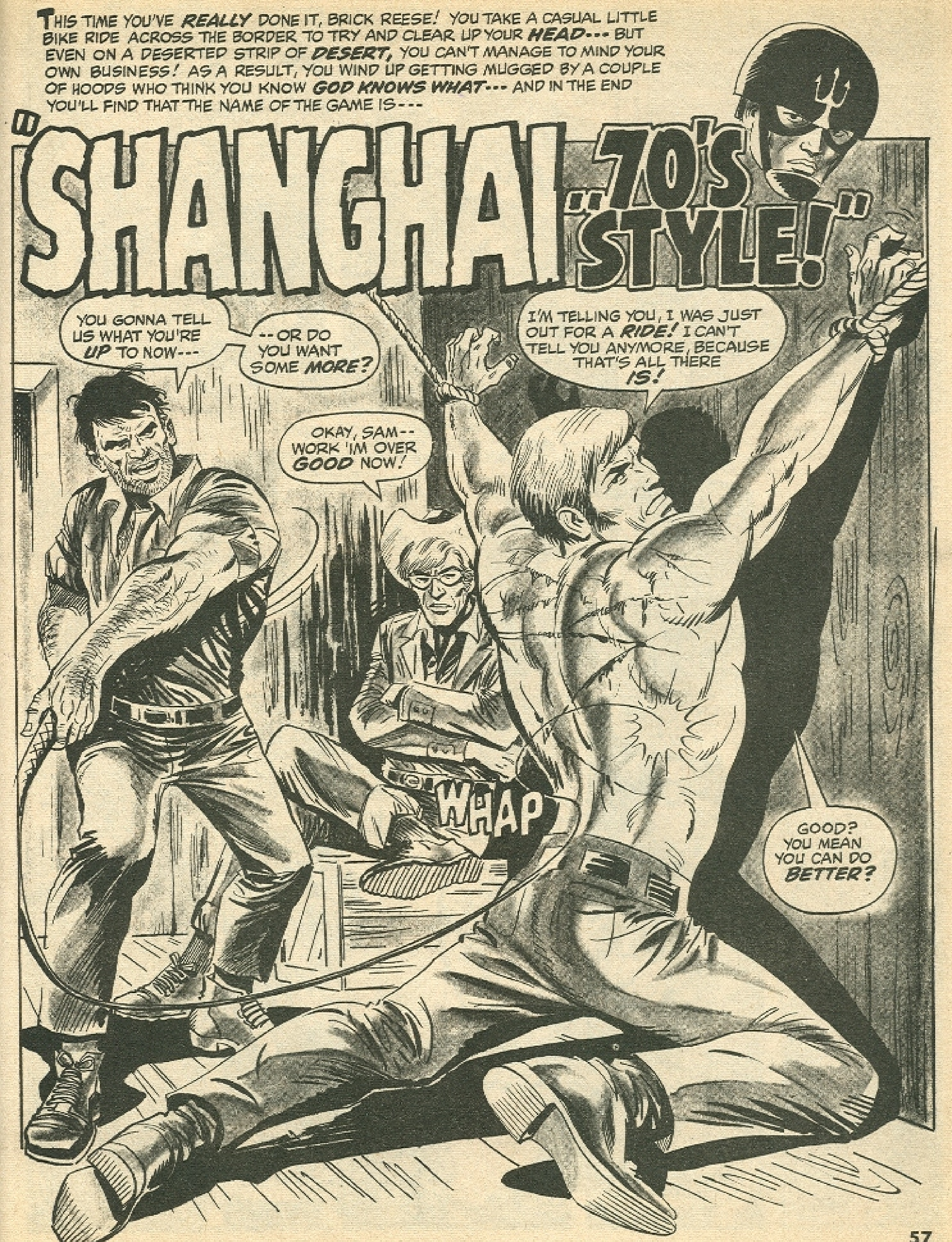

THEN A DOOR IN THE *SIDE* OF THE HOVERING MACHINE SWINGS OPEN, AND AN EERIE PROCESSION OF *HOODED FIGURES* BEGIN THEIR DESCENT...
ONE BY ONE THEY SLITHER DOWN A DANGLING *ROPE* LADDER AND DISAPPEAR INTO THE BUILDING *BELOW*, WHILE THE REST OF THE CITY MAKES MERRY, UNAWARE OF THE GRIM TABLEAU WHICH IS ABOUT TO *UNFOLD*...
MOMENTS LATER, AFTER THE HELICOPTER HAS UNLOADED ITS COSTUMED PASSENGERS AND DEPARTED THE SCENE, A *MEETING* BEGINS INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE... A GATHERING OF SICK, DISTORTED MINDS SUCH AS THIS COUNTRY HAS NOT WITNESSED SINCE THE *KU KLUX KLAN'S* RULE OF TERROR HELD THE *SOUTH* IN ITS DEADLY GRIP...
MY FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE *ORDER OF THE CRIMSON CROSS* ... I, YOUR *GRAND MASTER*, BRING YOU GLAD TIDINGS ON THIS NIGHT!
ON THIS EVENING, WE ARE CLOSER THAN EVER *BEFORE* TO ACHIEVING OUR GOAL... TO ERASE OUR GREAT LAND OF THE *BLACK BLIGHT* FOREVER!
AND I NOW INTRODUCE TO YOU THE NEGRESS WHO WILL BE THE *INSTRUMENT* OF OUR GREATEST TRIUMPH!
HE'S A RAVING *LUNATIC*... BUT HIS VOICE IS SOMEHOW *FAMILIAR!*
TONIGHT, BEFORE YOUR VERY *EYES*, WE WILL DISTORT HER MIND TO A POINT WHERE SHE WILL BECOME OUR DUTIFUL *SERVANT!*
THEN WE WILL SEND HER OUT AMONG HER *OWN KIND*... TO PREACH HATRED OF THE WHITES WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY *DESTROY* HER RACE FROM WITHIN!
AND ON THE DAY THE LAST NEGRO *DIES*... THEN AND ONLY THEN SHALL THE ORDER OF THE CRIMSON CROSS BE AT *PEACE!*


SO BE IT! THE GRAND MASTER'S WISH IS OUR COMMAND!!
DEATH! DEATH! DEATH!
PURIFY AMERICA! GET RID OF INFERIOR RACES!
WATCH, MY BROTHERS... AS I PLACE THE *THOUGHT-ERASER* UPON HER HELPLESS HEAD...
...AND KNOW AS YOU WATCH IT WORK HOW *SUPERIOR* IT MAKES US TO SUCH GROUPS AS THE *KLAN*!
HOWEVER, AS THE GRAND MASTER RANTS AND *RAVES*, THE SUCTION-CUP-TIPPED FINGERS OF THE BUTTERFLY ARE HARD AT *WORK*...
SHE'S SLIPPED HER BONDS!
WHA...?! STOP HER!
STAY *CALM*, MY BROTHERS! WHAT HAVE ALL OF *US* TO FEAR FROM A MERE *NEGRESS*?!
GUESS YOU HAVEN'T GOT THE *MESSAGE* YET... THAT *BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL*...
AMONG *OTHER* THINGS! BUT I'LL UNDERSTAND IF YOU DON'T *SEE* THAT...
...IT WON'T BE *EASY* FOR YOU WHILE YOU'RE TEMPORARILY *BLINDED*!
NOW I WANT ALL OF YOU TO *SIT TIGHT*... WHILE I STRAIGHTEN YOUR BOSS OUT ON A FEW FACTS OF *LIFE*!

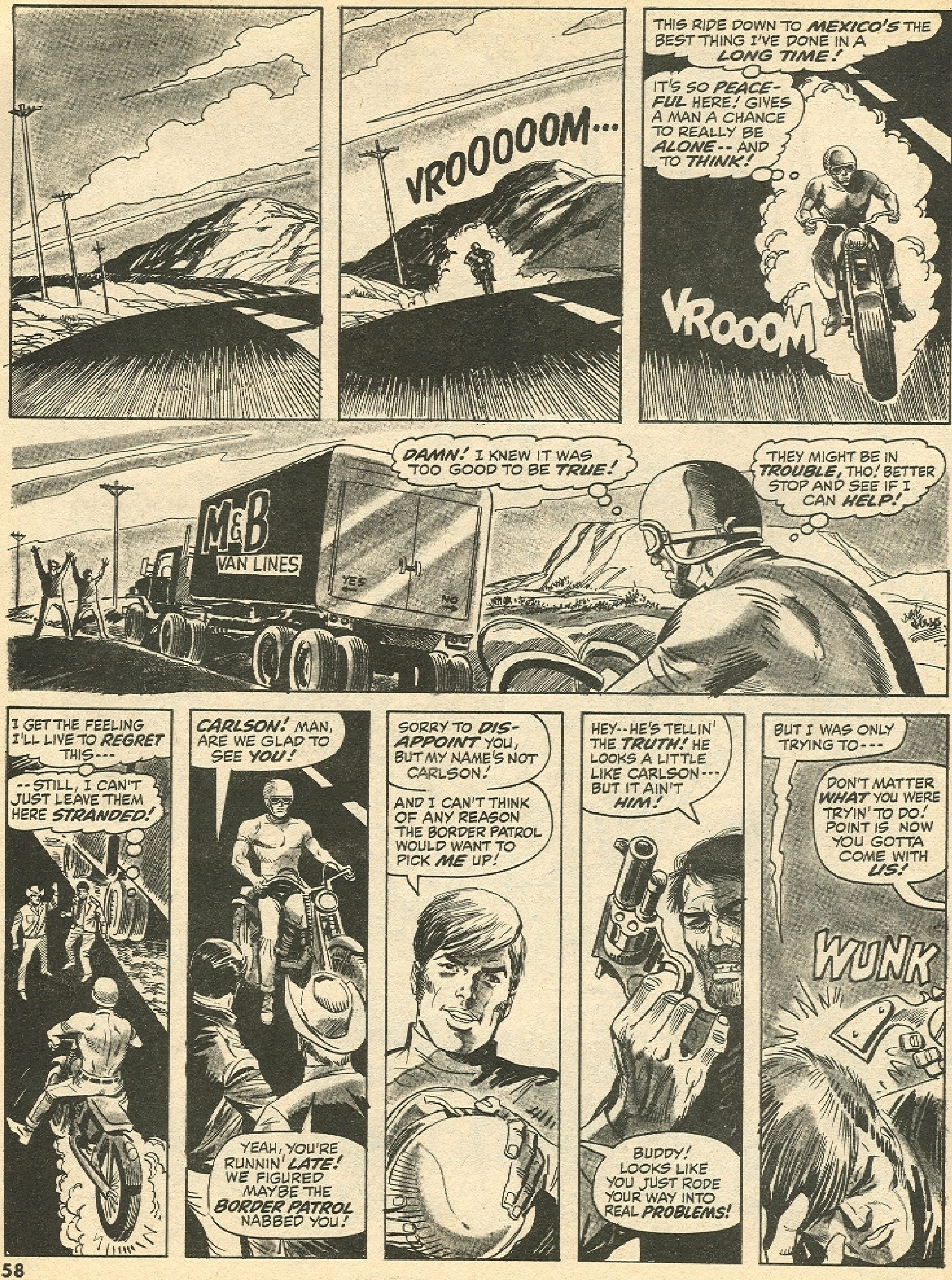

NOW WHERE DID THAT *FOOL SPLIT* TO?! HE COULDN'T BE RUNNING FROM JUST LITTLE *ME!*
OR *COULD* HE?!
HEY, WHAT'S THE BIG *IDEA*... CUTTING OUT BEFORE YOUR *SPEECH* WAS OVER!
WAIT UP, MAN! I WANT TO HEAR SOME *MORE* ABOUT HOW INFERIOR I AM!
ALL TALKED OUT, HUH?! GUESS IT'S JUST AS *WELL* FOR NOW...
...SINCE YOU'RE GONNA HAVE A LOT OF TIME TO RAP ABOUT IT IN *PRISON!*
THEN, AS THE GRAND MASTER *COLLAPSES* FROM THE FORCE OF OUR HEROINE'S *TACKLE...*
WOULDN'T YOU JUST *KNOW* IT?! WHEN THE *WORK'S* DONE... HERE COMES THE *LAW!*
HELP YOURSELF, GANG! THERE MUST BE AT LEAST A HUNDRED MORE IN THE *WAREHOUSE!*
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE DONE MY JOB *FOR ME,* SISTER! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?!
THE PAPERS CALL ME *THE BUTTERFLY...* BUT IF YOU STAY COOL, I'LL LET YOU CALL ME *BEAUTIFUL!*
CRAZY! I'M TONY MORRIS, SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR FOR THE *F.B.I.!*
I'VE BEEN ON THE *TRAIL* OF THE CRIMSON CROSS CREEPS FOR NEARLY A *YEAR* NOW!
WELL, YOU CAN STOP *CHASIN'* HANDSOME... 'CAUSE THEIR HEAD MAN HAS *HAD* IT!
NOW JUST LET ME SEE IF HE'S WHO I *THINK* HE... *YEP!*
WHEN THE HOMING DEVICE HE SWALLOWED LED ME *HERE*... I KNEW IT HAD TO BE *THE SENATOR!*
IT'S PRETTY *SCARY* THAT SUCH A MAN COULD BE ELECTED TO SO HIGH AN OFFICE...
BUT I GUESS HE'S ONE OF THE *RARE* ONES THAT SNEAK THROUGH!
BUT *ENOUGH* OF THAT! THE JOB'S DONE, AND I'M *FREE* FOR THE TIME BEING!
HOW ABOUT HAVING A *DRINK* WITH ME... BEAUTIFUL?!
NEGATIVE! YOU'D BE EMBARRASSED IN PUBLIC WITH A COSTUMED KOOK LIKE *ME!*
NOW WHY'D I SAY *THAT?* LOOK'S LIKE MY HEAD'S RIGHT BACK WHERE IT *STARTED!*
END- **BUTTERFLY** --NEXT ISSUE: PART OF A REAL ZINGER!!

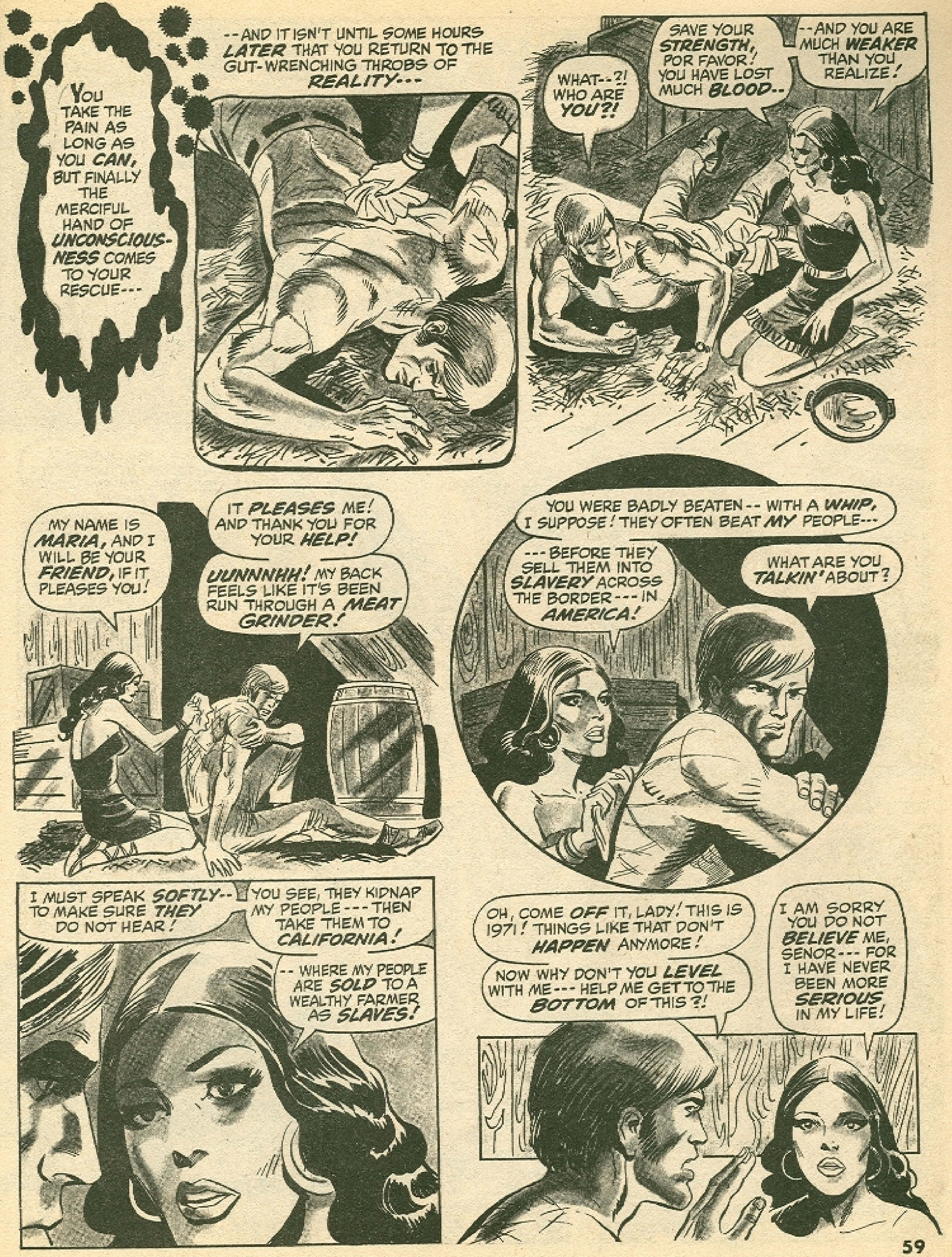
THIS TIME YOU'VE ***REALLY*** DONE IT, BRICK REESE! YOU TAKE A CASUAL LITTLE BIKE RIDE ACROSS THE BORDER TO TRY AND CLEAR UP YOUR ***HEAD***--- BUT EVEN ON A DESERTED STRIP OF ***DESERT***, YOU CAN'T MANAGE TO MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS! AS A RESULT, YOU WIND UP GETTING MUGGED BY A COUPLE OF HOODS WHO THINK YOU KNOW ***GOD KNOWS WHAT***--- AND IN THE END YOU'LL FIND THAT THE NAME OF THE GAME IS---

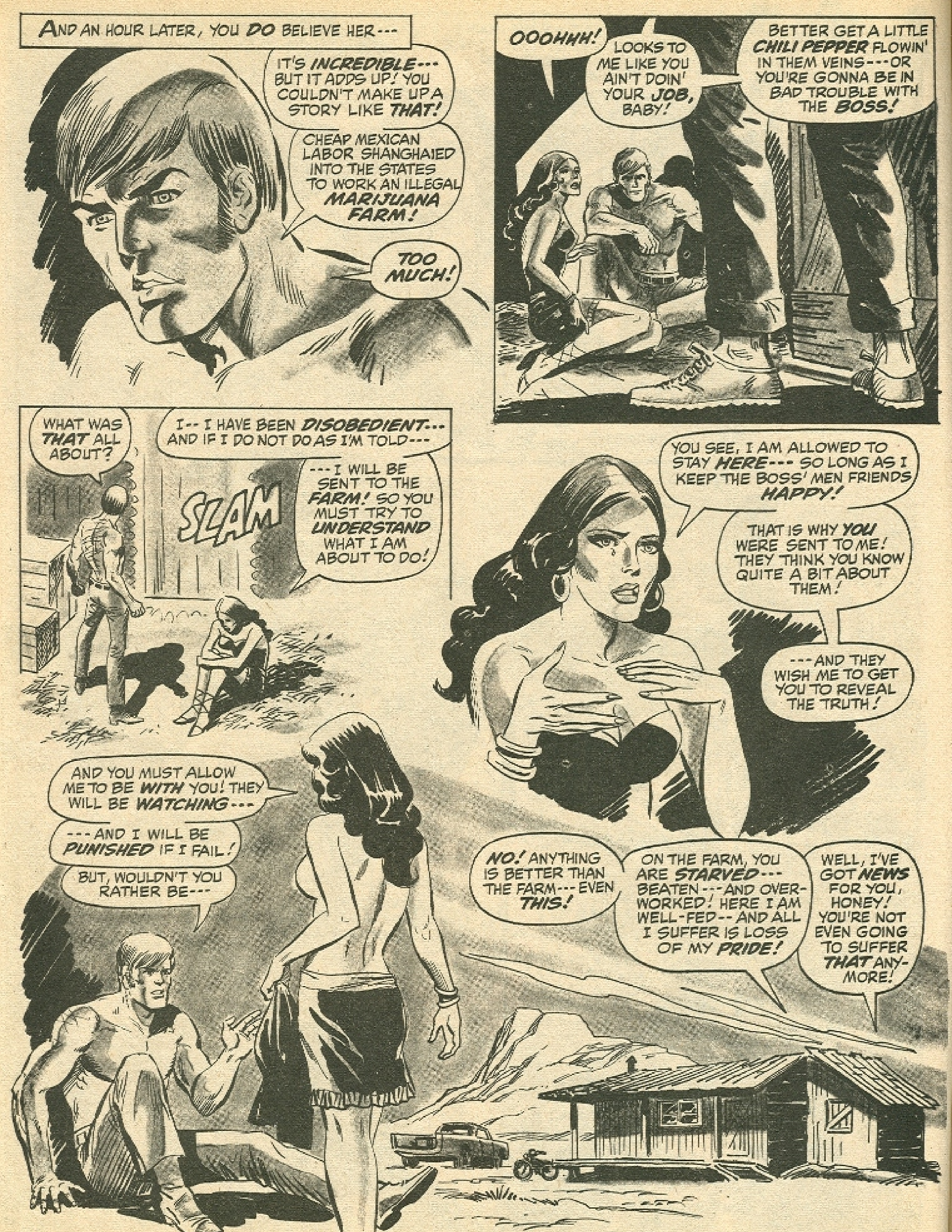
"SHANGHAI.. 70'S STYLE!"

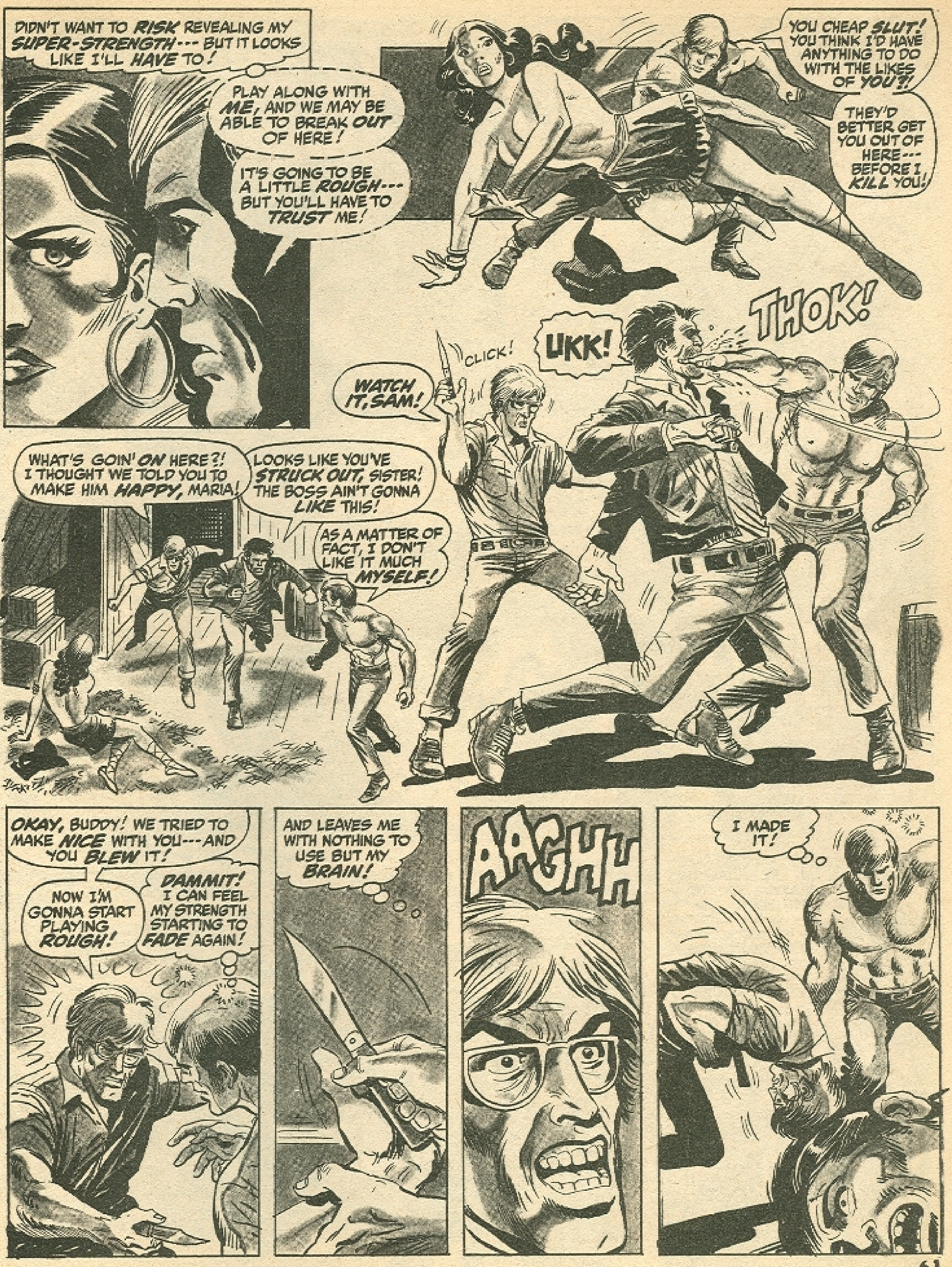

YOU GONNA TELL US WHAT YOU'RE *UP* TO NOW---
--OR DO YOU WANT SOME *MORE?*
I'M TELLING YOU, I WAS JUST OUT FOR A *RIDE!* I CAN'T TELL YOU ANYMORE, BECAUSE THAT'S ALL THERE *IS!*
OKAY, SAM-- WORK 'IM OVER *GOOD* NOW!
WHAP
GOOD? YOU MEAN YOU CAN DO *BETTER?*

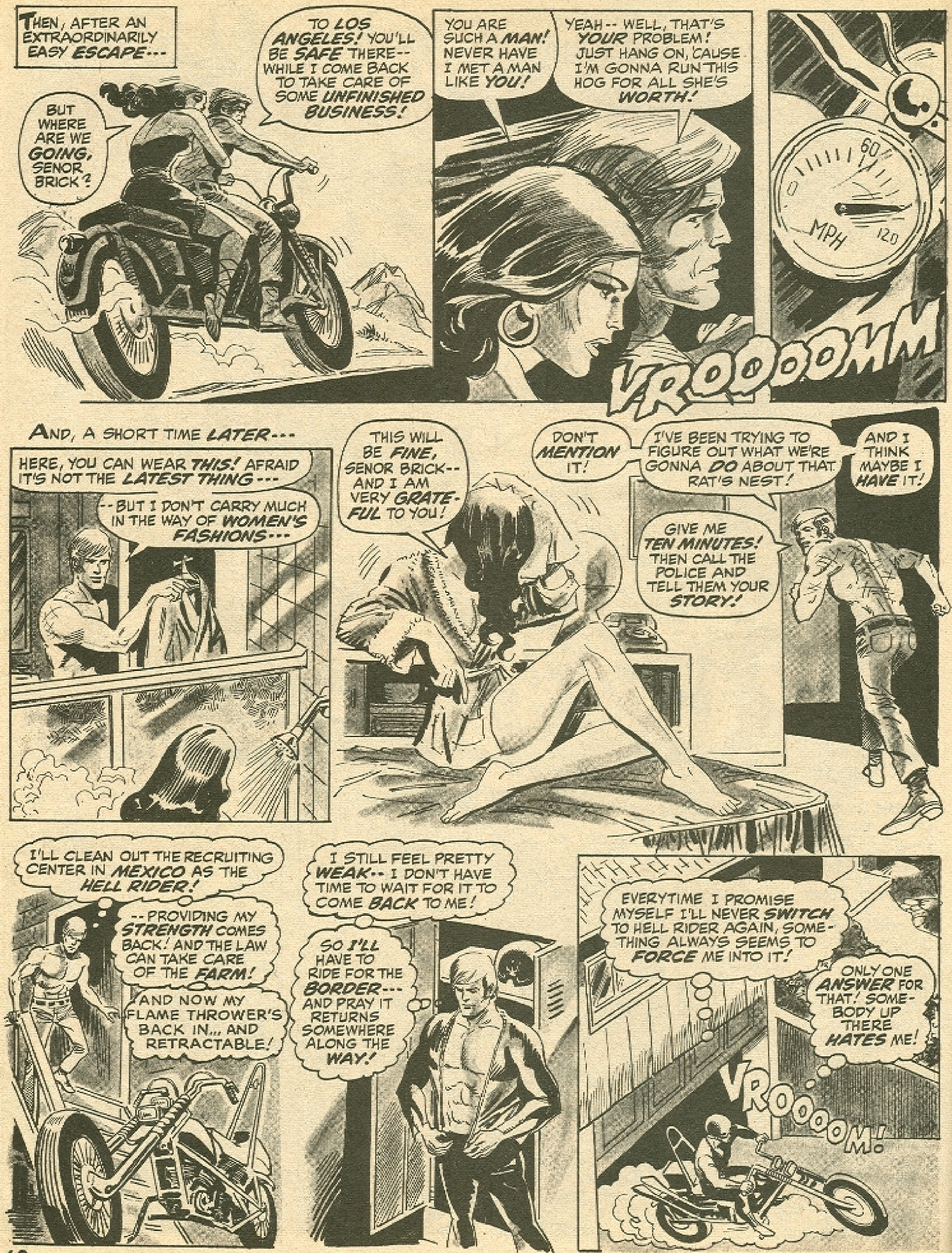
Script By: GARY FREIDRICH • Art By: ROSS ANDRU and MIKE ESPOSITO

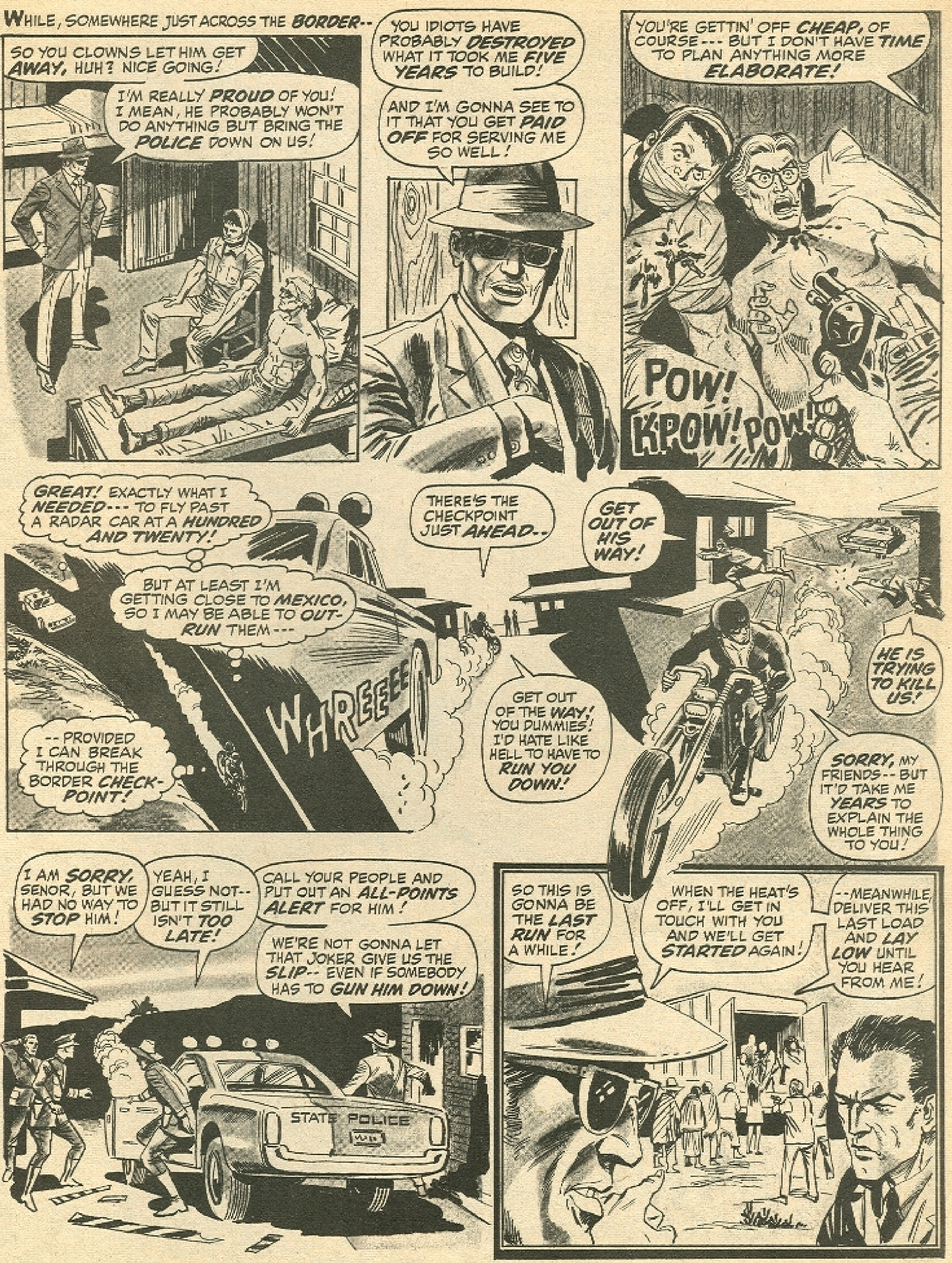

VROOOOOM...
THIS RIDE DOWN TO *MEXICO'S* THE BEST THING I'VE DONE IN A *LONG TIME!*
IT'S SO *PEACEFUL* HERE! GIVES A MAN A CHANCE TO REALLY BE *ALONE*-- AND TO *THINK!*
VROOOM
M&B VAN LINES
YES
NO
DAMN! I KNEW IT WAS TOO GOOD TO BE *TRUE!*
THEY MIGHT BE IN *TROUBLE,* THO! BETTER STOP AND SEE IF I CAN *HELP!*
I GET THE FEELING I'LL LIVE TO *REGRET* THIS---
--STILL, I CAN'T JUST LEAVE THEM HERE *STRANDED!*
CARLSON! MAN, ARE WE GLAD TO SEE *YOU!*
YEAH, YOU'RE RUNNIN' *LATE!* WE FIGURED MAYBE THE *BORDER PATROL* NABBED YOU!
SORRY TO *DISAPPOINT* YOU, BUT MY NAME'S NOT CARLSON!
AND I CAN'T THINK OF ANY REASON THE BORDER PATROL WOULD WANT TO PICK *ME* UP!
HEY--HE'S TELLIN' THE *TRUTH!* HE LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE CARLSON--- BUT IT AIN'T *HIM!*
BUDDY! LOOKS LIKE YOU JUST RODE YOUR WAY INTO REAL *PROBLEMS!*
BUT I WAS ONLY TRYING TO---
DON'T MATTER *WHAT* YOU WERE TRYIN' TO DO! POINT IS NOW YOU GOTTA COME WITH *US!*
WUNK

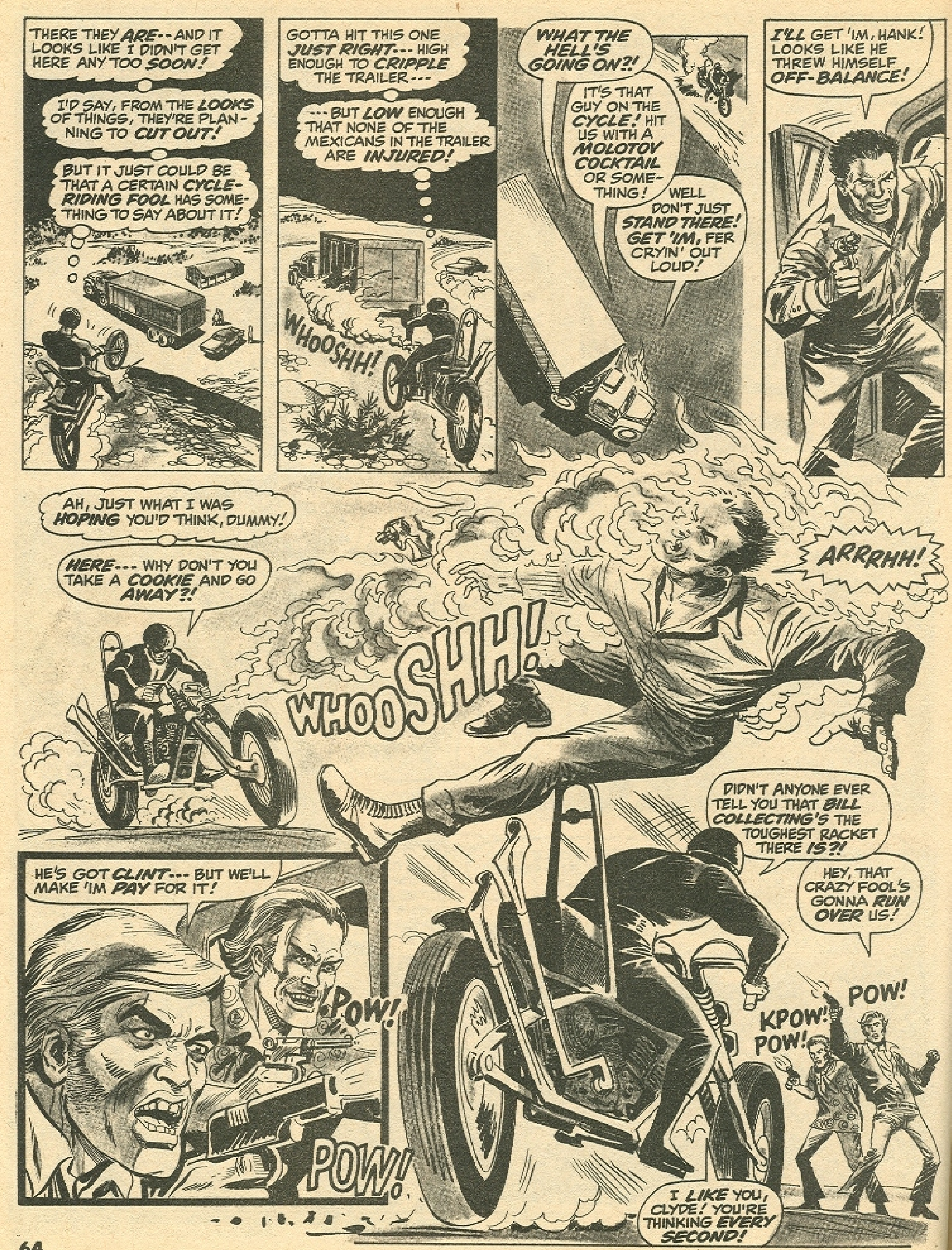

YOU TAKE THE PAIN AS LONG AS YOU CAN, BUT FINALLY THE MERCIFUL HAND OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS COMES TO YOUR RESCUE---
--AND IT ISN'T UNTIL SOME HOURS LATER THAT YOU RETURN TO THE GUT-WRENCHING THROBS OF REALITY---
WHAT--?! WHO ARE YOU?!
SAVE YOUR STRENGTH, POR FAVOR! YOU HAVE LOST MUCH BLOOD--
--AND YOU ARE MUCH WEAKER THAN YOU REALIZE!
MY NAME IS MARIA, AND I WILL BE YOUR FRIEND, IF IT PLEASES YOU!
IT PLEASES ME! AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!
UUNNNHH! MY BACK FEELS LIKE IT'S BEEN RUN THROUGH A MEAT GRINDER!
YOU WERE BADLY BEATEN-- WITH A WHIP, I SUPPOSE! THEY OFTEN BEAT MY PEOPLE---
---BEFORE THEY SELL THEM INTO SLAVERY ACROSS THE BORDER---IN AMERICA!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?
I MUST SPEAK SOFTLY-- TO MAKE SURE THEY DO NOT HEAR!
YOU SEE, THEY KIDNAP MY PEOPLE---THEN TAKE THEM TO CALIFORNIA!
-- WHERE MY PEOPLE ARE SOLD TO A WEALTHY FARMER AS SLAVES!
OH, COME OFF IT, LADY! THIS IS 1971! THINGS LIKE THAT DON'T HAPPEN ANYMORE!
NOW WHY DON'T YOU LEVEL WITH ME--- HELP ME GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS?!
I AM SORRY YOU DO NOT BELIEVE ME, SENOR--- FOR I HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE SERIOUS IN MY LIFE!

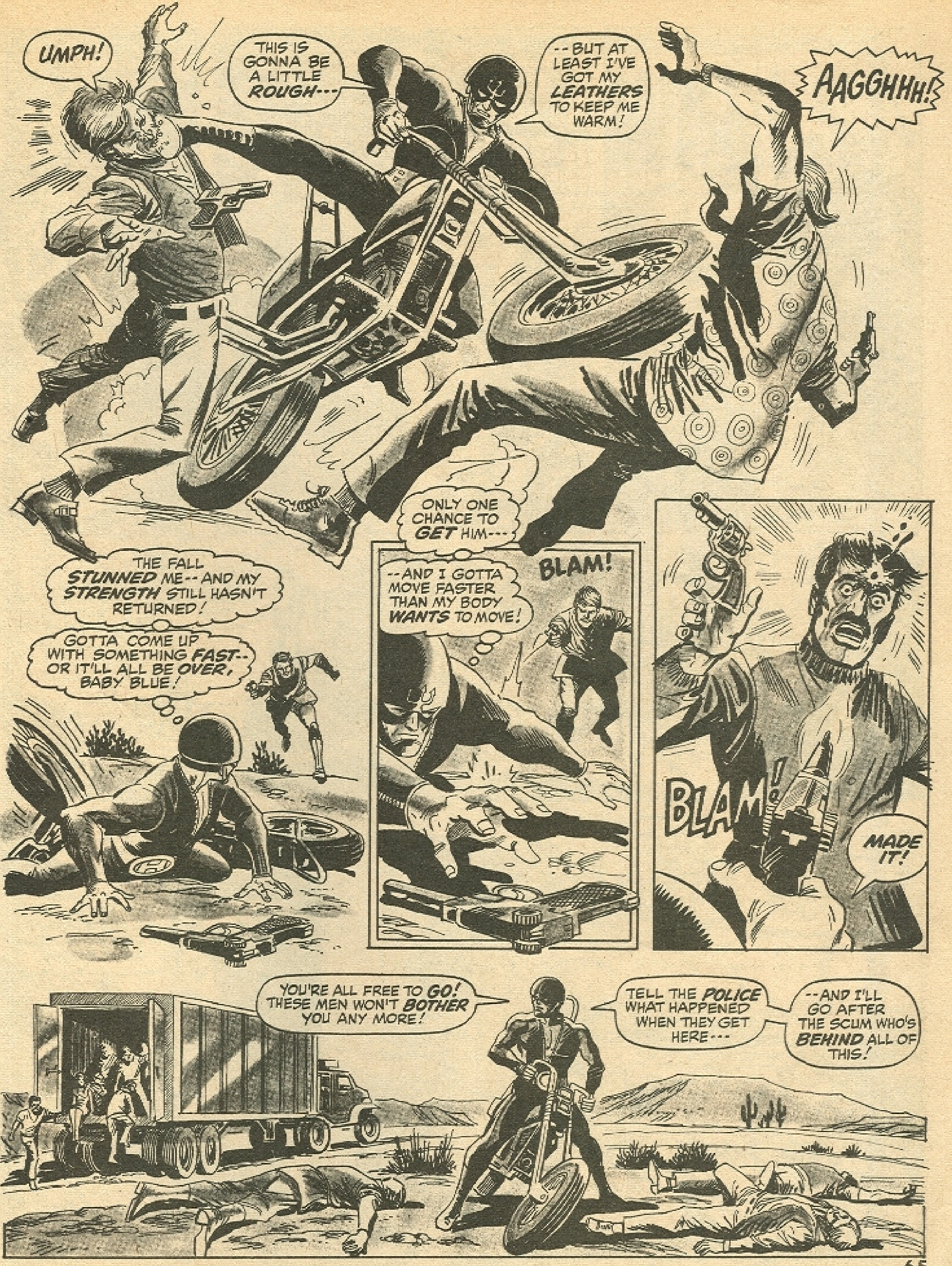

AND AN HOUR LATER, YOU DO BELIEVE HER---
IT'S INCREDIBLE--- BUT IT ADDS UP! YOU COULDN'T MAKE UP A STORY LIKE THAT!
CHEAP MEXICAN LABOR SHANGHAIED INTO THE STATES TO WORK AN ILLEGAL MARIJUANA FARM!
TOO MUCH!
OOOHHH!
LOOKS TO ME LIKE YOU AIN'T DOIN' YOUR JOB, BABY!
BETTER GET A LITTLE CHILI PEPPER FLOWIN' IN THEM VEINS---OR YOU'RE GONNA BE IN BAD TROUBLE WITH THE BOSS!
WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
I-- I HAVE BEEN DISOBEDIENT--- AND IF I DO NOT DO AS I'M TOLD---
SLAM
---I WILL BE SENT TO THE FARM! SO YOU MUST TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT I AM ABOUT TO DO!
YOU SEE, I AM ALLOWED TO STAY HERE--- SO LONG AS I KEEP THE BOSS' MEN FRIENDS HAPPY!
THAT IS WHY YOU WERE SENT TO ME! THEY THINK YOU KNOW QUITE A BIT ABOUT THEM!
---AND THEY WISH ME TO GET YOU TO REVEAL THE TRUTH!
AND YOU MUST ALLOW ME TO BE WITH YOU! THEY WILL BE WATCHING---
---AND I WILL BE PUNISHED IF I FAIL!
BUT, WOULDN'T YOU RATHER BE---
NO! ANYTHING IS BETTER THAN THE FARM--- EVEN THIS!
ON THE FARM, YOU ARE STARVED--- BEATEN---AND OVERWORKED! HERE I AM WELL-FED-- AND ALL I SUFFER IS LOSS OF MY PRIDE!
WELL, I'VE GOT NEWS FOR YOU, HONEY! YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOING TO SUFFER THAT ANYMORE!

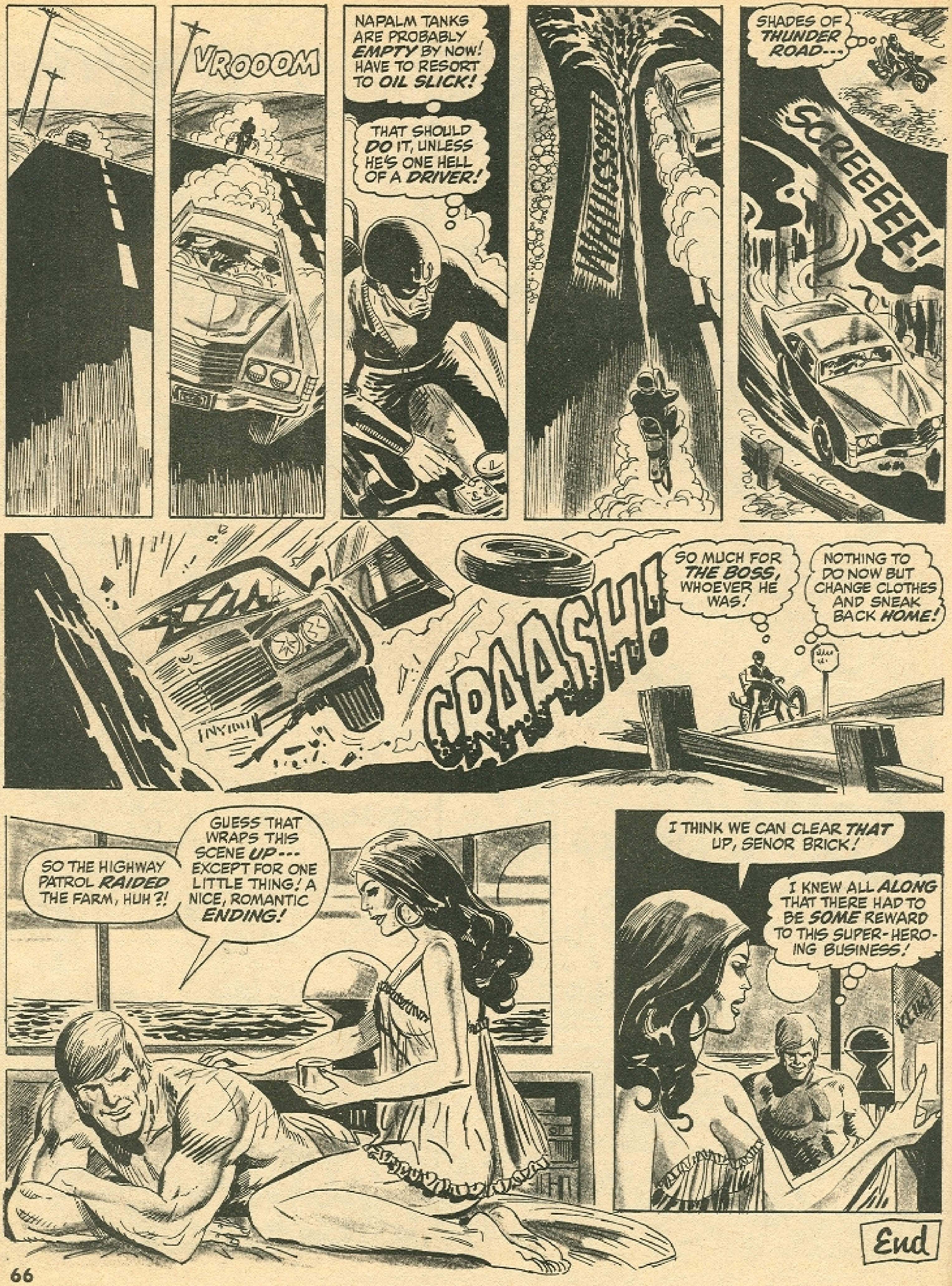

DIDN'T WANT TO RISK REVEALING MY SUPER-STRENGTH--- BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO!
PLAY ALONG WITH ME, AND WE MAY BE ABLE TO BREAK OUT OF HERE!
IT'S GOING TO BE A LITTLE ROUGH--- BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO TRUST ME!
YOU CHEAP SLUT! YOU THINK I'D HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE LIKES OF YOU?!
THEY'D BETTER GET YOU OUT OF HERE--- BEFORE I KILL YOU!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?! I THOUGHT WE TOLD YOU TO MAKE HIM HAPPY, MARIA!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE STRUCK OUT, SISTER! THE BOSS AIN'T GONNA LIKE THIS!
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I DON'T LIKE IT MUCH MYSELF!
THOK!
UKK!
CLICK!
WATCH IT, SAM!
OKAY, BUDDY! WE TRIED TO MAKE NICE WITH YOU--- AND YOU BLEW IT!
NOW I'M GONNA START PLAYING ROUGH!
DAMMIT! I CAN FEEL MY STRENGTH STARTING TO FADE AGAIN!
AND LEAVES ME WITH NOTHING TO USE BUT MY BRAIN!
AAGHH
I MADE IT!


THEN, AFTER AN EXTRAORDINARILY EASY ESCAPE---
BUT WHERE ARE WE GOING, SENOR BRICK?
TO LOS ANGELES! YOU'LL BE SAFE THERE-- WHILE I COME BACK TO TAKE CARE OF SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS!
YOU ARE SUCH A MAN! NEVER HAVE I MET A MAN LIKE YOU!
YEAH -- WELL, THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM! JUST HANG ON, 'CAUSE I'M GONNA RUN THIS HOG FOR ALL SHE'S WORTH!
0
60
120
MPH
VROOOOMM
AND, A SHORT TIME LATER---
HERE, YOU CAN WEAR THIS! AFRAID IT'S NOT THE LATEST THING---
--BUT I DON'T CARRY MUCH IN THE WAY OF WOMEN'S FASHIONS---
THIS WILL BE FINE, SENOR BRICK-- AND I AM VERY GRATEFUL TO YOU!
DON'T MENTION IT!
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT WE'RE GONNA DO ABOUT THAT RAT'S NEST!
AND I THINK MAYBE I HAVE IT!
GIVE ME TEN MINUTES! THEN CALL THE POLICE AND TELL THEM YOUR STORY!
I'LL CLEAN OUT THE RECRUITING CENTER IN MEXICO AS THE HELL RIDER!
--PROVIDING MY STRENGTH COMES BACK! AND THE LAW CAN TAKE CARE OF THE FARM!
AND NOW MY FLAME THROWER'S BACK IN..., AND RETRACTABLE!
I STILL FEEL PRETTY WEAK-- I DON'T HAVE TIME TO WAIT FOR IT TO COME BACK TO ME!
SO I'LL HAVE TO RIDE FOR THE BORDER--- AND PRAY IT RETURNS SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY!
EVERYTIME I PROMISE MYSELF I'LL NEVER SWITCH TO HELL RIDER AGAIN, SOMETHING ALWAYS SEEMS TO FORCE ME INTO IT!
ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR THAT! SOMEBODY UP THERE HATES ME!
VROOOOOM!


WHILE, SOMEWHERE JUST ACROSS THE BORDER--
SO YOU CLOWNS LET HIM GET AWAY, HUH? NICE GOING!
I'M REALLY PROUD OF YOU! I MEAN, HE PROBABLY WON'T DO ANYTHING BUT BRING THE POLICE DOWN ON US!
YOU IDIOTS HAVE PROBABLY DESTROYED WHAT IT TOOK ME FIVE YEARS TO BUILD!
AND I'M GONNA SEE TO IT THAT YOU GET PAID OFF FOR SERVING ME SO WELL!
YOU'RE GETTIN' OFF CHEAP, OF COURSE --- BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME TO PLAN ANYTHING MORE ELABORATE!
POW! KPOW! POW!
GREAT! EXACTLY WHAT I NEEDED--- TO FLY PAST A RADAR CAR AT A HUNDRED AND TWENTY!
BUT AT LEAST I'M GETTING CLOSE TO MEXICO, SO I MAY BE ABLE TO OUT-RUN THEM ---
-- PROVIDED I CAN BREAK THROUGH THE BORDER CHECK-POINT!
WHREEEE
THERE'S THE CHECKPOINT JUST AHEAD--
GET OUT OF HIS WAY!
GET OUT OF THE WAY! YOU DUMMIES! I'D HATE LIKE HELL TO HAVE TO RUN YOU DOWN!
HE IS TRYING TO KILL US!
SORRY, MY FRIENDS-- BUT IT'D TAKE ME YEARS TO EXPLAIN THE WHOLE THING TO YOU!
I AM SORRY, SENOR, BUT WE HAD NO WAY TO STOP HIM!
YEAH, I GUESS NOT-- BUT IT STILL ISN'T TOO LATE!
CALL YOUR PEOPLE AND PUT OUT AN ALL-POINTS ALERT FOR HIM!
WE'RE NOT GONNA LET THAT JOKER GIVE US THE SLIP-- EVEN IF SOMEBODY HAS TO GUN HIM DOWN!
STATE POLICE
SO THIS IS GONNA BE THE LAST RUN FOR A WHILE!
WHEN THE HEAT'S OFF, I'LL GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU AND WE'LL GET STARTED AGAIN!
--MEANWHILE, DELIVER THIS LAST LOAD AND LAY LOW UNTIL YOU HEAR FROM ME!


THERE THEY ARE--AND IT LOOKS LIKE I DIDN'T GET HERE ANY TOO SOON!
I'D SAY, FROM THE LOOKS OF THINGS, THEY'RE PLANNING TO CUT OUT!
BUT IT JUST COULD BE THAT A CERTAIN CYCLE-RIDING FOOL HAS SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT IT!
GOTTA HIT THIS ONE JUST RIGHT--- HIGH ENOUGH TO CRIPPLE THE TRAILER---
---BUT LOW ENOUGH THAT NONE OF THE MEXICANS IN THE TRAILER ARE INJURED!
WHOOSHH!
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?!
IT'S THAT GUY ON THE CYCLE! HIT US WITH A MOLOTOV COCKTAIL OR SOMETHING!
WELL DON'T JUST STAND THERE! GET 'IM, FER CRYIN' OUT LOUD!
I'LL GET 'IM, HANK! LOOKS LIKE HE THREW HIMSELF OFF-BALANCE!
AH, JUST WHAT I WAS HOPING YOU'D THINK, DUMMY!
HERE--- WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A COOKIE AND GO AWAY?!
ARRRHH!
WHOOSHH!
DIDN'T ANYONE EVER TELL YOU THAT BILL COLLECTING'S THE TOUGHEST RACKET THERE IS?!
HEY, THAT CRAZY FOOL'S GONNA RUN OVER US!
HE'S GOT CLINT--- BUT WE'LL MAKE 'IM PAY FOR IT!
POW!
POW!
POW!
KPOW!
POW!
I LIKE YOU, CLYDE! YOU'RE THINKING EVERY SECOND!


UMPH!
THIS IS GONNA BE A LITTLE ROUGH---
--BUT AT LEAST I'VE GOT MY LEATHERS TO KEEP ME WARM!
AAGGHHH!
THE FALL STUNNED ME--AND MY STRENGTH STILL HASN'T RETURNED!
GOTTA COME UP WITH SOMETHING FAST--OR IT'LL ALL BE OVER, BABY BLUE!
ONLY ONE CHANCE TO GET HIM---
--AND I GOTTA MOVE FASTER THAN MY BODY WANTS TO MOVE!
BLAM!
BLAM!
MADE IT!
YOU'RE ALL FREE TO GO! THESE MEN WON'T BOTHER YOU ANY MORE!
TELL THE POLICE WHAT HAPPENED WHEN THEY GET HERE---
--AND I'LL GO AFTER THE SCUM WHO'S BEHIND ALL OF THIS!


VROOOM
NAPALM TANKS ARE PROBABLY EMPTY BY NOW! HAVE TO RESORT TO OIL SLICK!
THAT SHOULD DO IT, UNLESS HE'S ONE HELL OF A DRIVER!
WHUSSH!
SHADES OF THUNDER ROAD...
SCREEEEEE!
CRAASH!
SO MUCH FOR THE BOSS, WHOEVER HE WAS!
NOTHING TO DO NOW BUT CHANGE CLOTHES AND SNEAK BACK HOME!
SO THE HIGHWAY PATROL RAIDED THE FARM, HUH?!
GUESS THAT WRAPS THIS SCENE UP--- EXCEPT FOR ONE LITTLE THING! A NICE, ROMANTIC ENDING!
I THINK WE CAN CLEAR THAT UP, SENOR BRICK!
I KNEW ALL ALONG THAT THERE HAD TO BE SOME REWARD TO THIS SUPER-HEROING BUSINESS!
KLIK!
End